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THE GOSPEL IN NUMBERS

By

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FOREWORD

One of the saddest Books in the Bible is the Book of Numbers. It is a book of failure from beginning to end; a book of repeated opportunity for Israel; of repeated warnings and encouragements from God; and yet of repeated failure on Israel's part to heed the warnings or avail themselves of their opportunities.

The book begins with express commands from God and ends with the reiteration of these commands. It ends with Israel just where it began with her, for she had not advanced during her forty years wandering an inch.

The name Numbers tells its meaning—the enumeration of Israel. It follows Leviticus in the divine order logically because it is the book of service and walk of God's people, and this ever follows our worship.

The first books of the Bible are not arranged hit-or-miss, but reveal God's revelation and plan in an orderly manner.

Genesis is the book of creation and fall.

Exodus is the book of redemption.

Leviticus is the book of worship and fellowship.

Numbers is the book of service and walk.

The same divine ordering that we have seen in Exodus regarding the Tabernacle and in Leviticus regarding the sacrifices is seen in the book of Numbers. Every tribe had its God-appointed place and work, and every household of every tribe had its appointed place, and every member and every servant of every tribe had the same. Nothing was left to man's choice or decision.

The Lord spake; it was only for man to obey.

But alas, Numbers is on man's part the book of failure, and it is most significant to find in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, where God's Honor Roll is re-

corded in such glowing names, that there is no mention of the book of Numbers. Truly without faith it is impossible to please God.

Israel's journey might have been completed within a few weeks of her leaving Egypt. All the victories which she won over the giants in the land might have been won 40 years before quite as well as 40 years after. But we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Wandering.

Wandering is a very different thing from walking. Wandering is an aimless, goalless thing, a going round and round the same old path but never arriving. And this for 40 years Israel did. What a warning for us. How many of us never make any real progress in our spiritual life through unbelief. How many of us are so occupied with contemplating the giants in the way, that we not only ignore the luscious clusters of grapes growing in our Canaan but quite ignore the fact that it is our God who commands us to go up and possess the land. That it is He who goeth **before** who will be our guide even until death and who is quite able to subdue all His and our enemies.

Canaan.

We must remember in this regard that Canaan here is not a type or picture of heaven for several reasons.

First—Canaan is inhabited by enemies.

Second—To overcome the enemies Israel must fight.

Third—There continued sowing and reaping, marrying and giving in marriage.

The natural life of Israel continued.

Now in heaven there are no enemies. There will be no warfare. The natural life will be swallowed up by the supernatural and we will be like the angels, neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

What then does Canaan foreshadow?

Surely the life of rest and faith in God **here** and **now.**

Have we got it? Can we possess it? How is it to be obtained?

Well, our study of the Gospel in Numbers ought to teach this very clearly. And it is the earnest prayer of the one who compiled the following lessons that they will lead all who study them by faith to enter in **here** and **now** to the **promised possession.**

Our God is Able.

Able to subdue all His and our enemies.

Able to keep us from falling.

Able to keep us in perfect peace.

Able to give us richly all things to enjoy.

Able to save to the **uttermost** all those who come to Him by Jesus Christ.

Canaan then is the **Rest of Faith.**

It is our inheritance. But how few there be who have courage to enter in.

Heb. 4:1, 2, 9-11.

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

"They came to the gates of Canaan,
But they never entered in,
They came to the very threshold,
But they perished in their sin.

On the morrow they would have entered,
But God had shut the gate;
They wept, they rashly ventured,
But alas! it was too late.

And so we are ever coming
To the place where two ways part;

One leads to the land of promise,
And one to a hardened heart."
—*By Dr. A. B. Simpson.*

The student is referred to the following books for further study.

The notes on the Gospel in Numbers have been largely culled from them and many other sources.

The Scofield Reference Bible	
Moses. The Law Giver	by Moses M. Taylor, D. D.
The Pentateuch	by William Evans Ph. D., D. D.
Christ in the Bible	by A. B. Simpson
Numbers	by C. H. MacIntosh
Old Testament Studies	by Leon B. Tucker
Numerical Bible	by Grant

DIVISION I.

LESSON I.

THE OLD GENERATION.

Part I.

THE OLD GENERATION.

Numbers 1-11.

(a) The Order of the Host

As we would expect from the title of the book it opens with a numeration of Israel's males—all that were able to go to war.

In Exodus when God led His people by a roundabout way on their journey from Egypt we noticed His tender care of them, for then they were a mere multitude of timid slaves, untrained, untaught, undisciplined, and God in His loving guidance saved them from war.

Ex. 13:17.

17 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt.

But now they had been under His care and discipline for some time and had been the daily witnesses of His power and marvelous provision for them and the time had come to put their faith to the test to see if they had learned their lessons and were ready to follow as He might lead.

Numbering the people.

So the muster roll of the nation was called for and every tribe was numbered and every man in the tribe was assigned his place by God. Not one soul was overlooked, whether prince or servant. All had their places pointed out to them. Theirs but to accept the place signified.

What comfort this brings to us. Every believing child of God is numbered by the Father and his place

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assigned; his work cut out for him and he trained and adapted for his work.

Read Luke 12:6, 7.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

John 10:2-4.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

What a vast difference it would make in the work of the Church today if every one found out his rightful place from God and then kept it.

No envying, no jealousies, no striving after others' positions. Surely the Holy Spirit could then move the whole Church of the living God as one vast army, conquering and to conquer, and the gates of hell could not prevail against it.

The sin of the Church is just the repetition of Israel's sin of old. Stubborn man through unbelief will not follow as fast as God leads and so turns back from the best to wander in by-paths of his own choosing.

The position of the Book.

It is instructive to notice the position in the order of the Books of the Bible which Numbers holds.

It is the fourth Book, and if, as we have seen in Exodus, the numbers indicated throughout the Scriptures are significant and teach a real truth, then the number four must mean something here.

That the arrangement of the Books of the Old Testament are as God intended them to be we can infer from our Lord's testimony to them when He was upon earth. We have them today in the same order in

which He had them and He testified to their inspiration and to their Truth, if there had been any error for us to note He would have corrected it then. So we may confidently affirm that not only the original words of God transcribed for us by His amanuensis, but that the arrangement of the Books have a Divinely appointed order, as well. All this is beautifully unfolded in these first five Books.

Genesis, the first book, proclaims God the one and only true God as Creator.

Exodus, the second Book, proclaims the Second Person of the God-head, God the Son, as Redeemer.

Leviticus, the third Book, proclaims the Third Person of the God-head, the Holy Ghost, as the Author and Controller of all true worship, while

Numbers, the fourth Book, is the Book of man's failure, four being the earthly number, as shown in chart contained in Gospel of Exodus.

Christ in type.

Numbers also contains four types of Christ as Son of man on earth:

(1) The Bread of Life in chapter 11:7-9

7 And the manna was as coriander seed, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium.

8 And the people went about and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.

9 And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.

Compare John 6:57-59.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

(2) The Water of Life in chapter 20:11

11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

Compare 1 Cor. 10:4.

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

(3) The serpent of brass in chapter 21:9

9 And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Compare John 3:14, 15.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

(4) The coming Star out of Jacob in chapter 24:17

17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

Compare Luke 1:78.

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

2 Pet. 1:19.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Rev. 2:28.

28 And I will give him the morning star.

Rev. 22:16.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

In Genesis we hear God speaking of **election** of His people.

In Exodus of their **redemption** by the shed blood.

In Leviticus of their **way of approach** through the sacrifices in the tabernacle.

But here in Numbers we read of war, camps, the sounds and signs of **battle.**

Israel fights giants, hews Agag in pieces, overcomes walled cities all in **warfare.**

And this is indeed typical of God's people while on this earth, engaged in war, not now with flesh and blood, as the Canaanites, the Amalekites, etc., but with spiritual wickedness in high places; not now with Agag, the biggest and vilest of them all, but with a greater than Agag, our adversary the devil—Satan, the prince of the power of the air.

Eph. 6:11-13.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

The Pedigrees.

In reading the long chapter of genealogies in the Bible you have no doubt as so many others yawned over them, or more often perhaps skipped them altogether, but since they **have** been inserted by the Holy Spirit they must in God's sight be of importance and must contain lessons for us.

One lesson we readily see is the ability of an Israelite to trace his national lineage. While all lists of ancestors are dull to others our own are usually of intense interest to us, especially if some desired benefit depends upon our ability to establish it. Hence the importance to Israel of these tables.

But there is a deeper and more significant reason for the tables recorded, for many have been omitted

from the sacred text and only certain ones left for our perusal, and the reason is shown in Matthew and Luke, where these long lines merge into the ancestry of our Lord on the human side. God recorded these genealogical tables in order to establish the claim of His Son by human inheritance to the throne of David as Israel's lawful King, and no genealogical table of any one is recorded in the New Testament after the coming of Christ.

The first requirement for Israel's warfare was the enrollment of her men of war. There was no excuse for an Israelite (ever) being in doubt about his pedigree, or his position in the body politic. His name was written there in the archives of the nation, and one of the reasons for this call to enrollment was that every Israelite might be assured of his position nationally.

Some one tells of the following:

I went **to West Point** not long ago, and we had an evening meeting in the old chapel. As we passed under the rear gallery to go out, one of the students stopped and said, "I wish **you would look at that shield on the wall there**; that is the **most striking** thing at **the academy to me.**" I looked at the wall; all around there were marble shields set in the wall, and **on each shield was the name of one of our Revolutionary generals.** Then I looked up at the particular shield to which attention had been called, and **that shield was blank.** It was there in form just as the others, but with **no name on it**; simply **the words Major-General, and** the **date of the unnamed general's birth.** "What does **it mean?**" I asked. "Well," said the cadet, **"that is the shield for Benedict Arnold.** There is a shield for every **Revolutionary general,** and one for him too, but **the nation would not cut his name on it nor the date of his death.** He denied **his country**; his **country has denied him.**

Neglect to enroll **now** would mean loss of nationality

hereafter. The Jew who refused to obey now would become an outcast—that anomaly in history—a man without a country. Notice the analogy in the Christian position today. Every child of God ought to know his pedigree as written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Is my name written there?

We can, and in fact, we ought to be just as sure of our position in God's family and God's army as any Israelite of old. Imagine an Israelite of old if asked of his pedigree saying as many Christians do of theirs, "Well, I hope I am of the stock of Israel but of course I cannot be sure until the day of judgment." In place of this doubt denoting great humility, as some seem to think, it is highly dishonoring to God and is actually denying His word of assurance.

Ye **are** all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Now **are** we the Sons of God and hundreds of other texts as conclusive.

Why is it that so many are proud of their long human pedigrees which after all if traced back to their original source would end in the same ancestor—a fallen man—while too few make sure of the new pedigree offered to all in Christ Jesus?

Ye must be born again. New creatures in Christ Jesus. Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

How such lineage makes the long lines of earthly kings and nobles, D. A. R's, Colonial Dames, etc., fade away to insignificance.

A woman was proudly boasting of her blue blood one day to a humble but unknown Christian who when asked from what stock she came, merely smiled and replied "that as she had been born again by the Blood of Jesus Christ she could trace her ancestry directly back to God and thought that quite royal enough to satisfy any one."

There are no doubt plenty of God's children who are saved and yet have no assurance of the same, for

salvation is by the faith of the Son of God and assurance is not salvation. Yet salvation **ought** to bring assurance for it is founded upon the Word of God, and until one **has** this assurance he will never make a good soldier of the Cross nor a successful worker in the Lord's vineyard nor an intelligent worshipper of the Father.

These things are dependent upon our being able to say confidently with Paul, "I **know** whom I have believed and am persuaded (convinced) that **He is able** to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Anything else makes God a liar, because it doubts His Word.

The Standards.

But Israel was not only numbered individually. Each tribe was given a standard and commanded to follow it, being assigned their place in the encampment and upon the march. To take up the significance of all these ensigns would occupy too much space in this brief study. We will notice only the four outstanding and most important ones.

The center of the camp was always occupied with the Tabernacle, a wide space being kept around it that none but the authorized might approach. The sacred Tabernacle and all that it symbolized was the center around which the whole life of Israel revolved. Thus pointing forward to the Cross of Christ the center and mainspring of all Christian activity, worship and service.

There were four great divisions surrounding the Tabernacle, the tents of the priests and Levites immediately around it and outside them ranging round their respective standards the twelve tribes, three on each side.

On the east were three tribes, the tribe of Judah being the outstanding one, which led the march with her

standard—the Lion—guiding all through the wilderness.

On the south three tribes, the tribe of Reuben, whose standard was the Face of a Man, falling in behind Judah on the march.

On the west three tribes, with Ephraim, whose standard was the Ox, and this tribe followed the moving Tabernacle, for that remained the center of the host whether at rest or on the journey.

Following Ephraim, on the north three tribes with the tribe of Dan leading. The standard an Eagle. So at rest or marching through the wilderness the Lion, the Man, the Ox, and the Eagle could always be seen surrounding the center of worship.

When one compares this with the four faces of the cherubim always looking in awe at the Mercy Seat, and then remembers that the four Gospels portray our Lord in four aspects, in Matthew as King, whose standard is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and in Mark as Servant, whose standard is the Ox, or beast of burden, and in Luke as Man, whose standard is the face of a Man, and in John as God, whose standard is the Eagle, disappearing in the heavens, one can readily see that God had His pictures in the Old Testament imagery of what His Son should be and do for us and for Him, and there was a Divine appointment for Israel in even such minute things as camp positions and tribe standards.

This only makes us marvel the more at the matchless precision of our God. All these things were done that we might believe on the Son for whom and by whom are all things.

There were three divisions or groups in Israel's numbering.

The first group were the warriors, as we have just seen, the men of war able to bear arms.

The second group were the workers, men for the service of the Tabernacle, the Levites.

While the third group were the worshippers, or men for the sacrifices of the Tabernacle, the priests.

These groups show the Divine plan in regard to our work and service as individual Christians, for no one can chose his work or place of service in the church.

God, the Holy Spirit, is the director and every pedigreed child of God has his work cut out for him and his place in the great army of workers assigned, and just so long as he obeys His commands and keeps rank, so long his work is blessed; but not otherwise. There is a tremendous lesson for us as Christians right here. Too many of us are arbitrarily choosing what we will do, and where we will work, not waiting for the sound of the trumpet to give us the commands of God.

And so there is in the church today an overlapping of work with a total lack in other places, jealousy, backbiting, envying, rebellion and interfering, all bringing the deepest reproach on our God and His service. My friends, these things ought not so to be.

Ja. 3:13-18.

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

1 Cor. 12:4-12, 18.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

Another most important and comforting lesson can be learned here.

Each had only his own task to perform—the work of the whole assembly did not fall upon his shoulders.

Knowing his appointed task he could say—

"This one thing I do." Too many of us are crushed in spirit by the overwhelming amount of Christian work needing to be done.

A woman worker in the terrible East End of London, which for fifty years has drunk up so much of the best effort of earnest Christians, has told us of the inroads this habit was making upon her. She said that day after day and month after month as she went about amid the sin and misery, shrinking from no facts but trying to feel them all and appreciate them all she found that every day the prospect was becoming more gloomy and the problem more and more insoluble. In a word, she was trying to bear upon her shoulders the whole weight of all this weary world she worked in, even though it crushed her. And then came the day when she just sat down to face it all out. She

said that if it rested upon her to change the whole situation she might just as well give up then as any time. No amount of responsibility or effort on her part, though she might increase it fourfold, was ever going to change the situation. She saw that even superhuman strength would not be enough. Her worrying night and day, her mind haggard with the effort to think it all out, was not helping things an iota. If things were to change she saw plainly that it would never be by such means as that. She was trying the impossible. Then she said that it could not be that God demanded any such attitude of her. He could do His work without it. It did not help Him in the least. And with that she made up her mind to go on, working as she could but with never another thought that the outcome all rested upon her or her efforts. No matter how the sad facts stared her in the face she was responsible only for her limited service, and that she was willing to give. The rest she turned all over to God and refused to be anxious or troubled about it. Then new peace and power came into her soul and her work.

The government is upon His shoulder. Our part but to hear His commands and follow them.

Phil. 2:3.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

The Priesthood.

In verse 49 we have this Divine arrangement set forth in God's command regarding the tribe of Levi. They alone of all Israel were not to be numbered as men of war, were to have no standard around which to rally, but have specific duties assigned them and special places provided for them for a specific reason. Why? Well, verse 12 of chapter 3 explains.

They were to be wholly dedicated to God, to serve in the Tabernacle as servants to Aaron and the priests,

to pitch their tents around the Tabernacle, which was to be to them in place of a standard, and to stand always before God in place of the firstborn Son of every other Israelitish family. Truly it was an honored place. They ministered in things holy; they represented their brethren before the Lord; their portion was within the sacred square itself in which the Holy Tabernacle stood in splendid isolation.

So God calls some of His children to a closer walk with Him. But when He does it involves separation even from that which is permitted to their brethren. The greater the service God permits us to render for Him the closer we must keep to Him, the more separate from even many legitimate things. Our New Testament teaching makes it clear. If God has called you to be really like Jesus in all your spirit He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and absolute surrender. You will not be allowed to do many things other Christians do—for your peace and power will depend upon your absolute obedience to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

God will be jealous of you with a holy jealousy and will guard and guide you in a very peculiar and personal way for His own glory. You will learn that others may, you cannot and you will rejoice in your soul's minute guidance.

1 Cor. 6:12.

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

1 Cor. 8:9, 13.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

1 Cor. 9:5, 12-14, 18, 19.

5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well

as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?
12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.
13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?
14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.
18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.
19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

The specific duties of the Levites are set forth in detail in chapter 3, and here again every duty is minutely defined.

There were three sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath and Merari, and each family had his own allotted work to do and none other.

The Gershonites had charge of the taking down and setting up of the Tabernacle, of the tent, the hangings, the coverings, the curtains and the cords.

The Kohathites had charge of the sacred vessels after they had been covered by the priests, for while they were to be carried on the staves provided for them, these holy vessels, only the anointed priests could handle or cover the same. So the Kohathites carried the ark, the table of shew bread, the golden candlesticks, the hangings and all the vessels of the Holy Place.

The Merarites had charge of the boards and the bars, the pillars and the sockets, the vessels of the outer courts, even to the including of the cords and the pins.

Can a God who so minutely ordered and carefully watched His ancient people Israel be less mindful of and solicitous for His chosen people in Christ? Surely whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do we are to do it unto the Lord.

On the march the curtains were to be used for the coverings of the vessels. The Ark alone was covered with the blue cloth denoting its heavenly character. The other utensils of the Holy Place were to be covered with the scarlet and the badger skin, type of the protection Christ's death and humanity affords His people, while the brazen utensils were covered with the royal purple, type of His royalty which has stooped to sacrifice and will one day be vindicated by God as His chosen King as well as our Saviour.

So through all the wilderness journey Israel moved under God's guidance, showing forth—unconsciously to them, no doubt, but consciously to God and angels and demons—the Lamb slain for our offences, raised again for our justification.

The meeting-place between God and man, which alone is in Christ Jesus our Lord, who was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him

2 Cor. 5:21.

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

and His banner over us is Love. Are ye numbered amongst the followers of the Lamb? That is the all important question, Have ye thy God-appointed task and are ye doing it as unto the Lord?

A true Levite in the wilderness could say, "To me to live is the Tabernacle." A true Christian should be able to say, "To me to live is Christ." We have no right to choose our own work any more than the Israelite. Each had his God-defined task and so have we.

True, service is not in working **for** God, but in allowing God to work **through** us; a totally different thing. God has His quarry-men, His stone masons, His builders. The whole edifice rises as each does the

part assigned him, whether carrying the mortar or placing the top stone.

The secret of success here is the secret Moses had when he numbered the children of Israel according to the Word of the Lord, **as he was commanded.** A man was once watching a bricklayer put up a wall when he remarked; "That's mighty poor material you are using," to which the bricklayer replied, "Well, Sir, I am not responsible for the material supplied, my business is to build the best wall I can with what is given me."

Imagine Gershon complaining because his lot was to care for only curtains and cords, while Kohath had the care of the holy things; or suppose Merari refusing his task because of the lowliness of being a pin-carrier. In fact, the lesson obviously is that to be appointed a pin-carrier **by** God and **for** God is as great an honor and as important a task as ministering in the holy things. To each his place and task. If God says work at home with the pots and the pans it is as blessed of Him as to preach from pulpit or go as a missionary. The blessing only follows obedience, and no work done under God's direction is small.

What ever dies or is forgot
Work done for God, it dieth not.

Read I Cor. 12:14-25.

The great question, and the only question for us is Is this my task?

MY SERVICE

I asked the Lord to let me do
Some mighty work for Him;
To fight amid His battle hosts,
Then sing the victor's hymn.
I longed my ardent love to show,
But Jesus would not have it so.

He placed me in a quiet home,
Whose life was calm and still,

And gave me little things to do,
My daily round to fill;
I could not think it good to be
Just put aside so silently.

Small duties gathered round my way,
They seemed of earth alone;
I, who had longed for conquests bright
To lay before His throne,
Had common things to do and bear,
To watch and strive with daily care.

So then I thought my prayer unheard,
And asked the Lord once more
That He would give me work for Him
And open wide the door;
Forgetting that my Master knew
Just what was best for me to do:

Then quietly the answer came,
"My child, I hear thy cry;
Think not that mighty deeds alone
Will bring the victory.
The battle has been planned by Me,
Let daily life thy conquests see."

A servant with this clause makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
Makes that and th' action fine."

One fact which many today overlook is that only work done for Christ through the energy of the Holy Spirit is blessed of God.

A man may have the most brilliant career, spend time, money and energy on laudable pursuits, and yet have his life a mere brilliant bubble, which will burst and forever disappear in the end; while the simplest service, the humblest life, the most un-noted sacrifice will earn eternal recognition if rendered in obedience to the voice of God.

God measures everything by Christ. Anything apart from Christ is self-centered and dies with us. All that belongs to Christ is unspeakably precious to God and eternal and therefore God can say

Matt. 10:42.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

A traveler describes two laborers in Africa, working together in the sowing of their fields. The one was without legs and the other was without arms. The armless one carried his neighbor on his shoulders, while the other scattered the seed with his hands, the two together constituting one working man. So let the sons of Kohath and Gershon and Merari work together in the mutual ministry of the heavenly tabernacle.

Eph. 2:19-22.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON 1.

INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE.

The order of the Host.

1. Why is Numbers a sad book?
2. What is its meaning?
3. In what does wandering differ from walking?
4. Give symbolic meaning of Canaan and reasons?
5. What does its position as the fourth book signify?
6. Give four clear types of Christ contained in Numbers.
7. State difference in method of approach to God in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers.
8. Why was Israel's genealogy important and what does it teach us? Give illustration.
9. Is every one a child of God? What constitutes a child of God? Can one have the assurance that he is a child of God?
10. Describe the four standards around the Ark and their New Testament teaching.
11. Name the three divisions of God's people and their duties and apply to the church.
12. What was the measure of success in Israel?
13. What in our lives?
14. Give illustration of unity in service.

DIVISION I.

LESSON II.

CLEANSING THE CAMP.

Part I.

CLEANSING THE CAMP.

The Law of Jealousy.

Chapters 5 to 8.

In the opening words of this chapter we find a repetition of the law regarding a leper in the camp, a law which is fully laid down in the Book of Leviticus.

Here in Numbers Moses is merely commanded to put away the diseased person or the one contaminated by the touch of death. All symbolically represents the defiling contact with sin, which when in or on one must be cleansed **according to the Word of God.**

The leper could not wash himself clean. No more can the sinner.

Job 9:30, 31.

30 If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;

31 Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

Micah 6:7.

7 Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

But God had provided a way by which the leper could be healed, the defiled cleansed. And so today the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

The remedy was at hand, but it had to be personally accepted. Our Study in Leviticus* explains all this much more fully.

One may be surprised to read the minute directions for the testing of a suspected wife in this chapter. And the obvious lesson to remember first of all is that God is here setting forth the need of absolute purity in

*The Gospel in Leviticus. Pub. The Book Stall, New York.

His people. Nothing defiling could be tolerated in the camp; one sinner brought defilement on the whole.

Sin was to be judged, not countenanced. Unless they, under God's directions, judged it, they became a party to it, and so made themselves guilty and liable to severe punishment. When the people sinned in making the calf, God's sword slew those who partook of this sin, even when the Levites had to slay their own brethren, and in mercy to the nation God ordered the Levites to destroy those wicked ones even where they were brothers in the flesh.

Too little do we realize the affront that sin is to God. Wherever sin is, wherever sin is winked at, wherever we permit it to go unjudged, i. e., treat it as a light thing, we are guilty of taking part in it and are so far in allegiance with God's arch enemy Satan, the author and organizer of sin.

This accounts for God's severe judgments on it both in His dealings with the heathen nations and in His own people. Sin must be judged and in time will be eradicated.

So in the case before us, any suspicion on the part of a jealous husband interrupted the holiness of the marriage relationship and must be sifted to the very bottom. If there was sinning the wife must go because she had defiled her marriage vow. But if she were innocent God Himself justified her before her husband, the priest and all the congregation, and the matter was then Divinely settled.

The test was the drinking of the bitter water, or water of death, for the dust of which it was made, being mixed with the water which was holy, represented the dust of the earth to which we return and is therefore symbolical of death, while water we have seen everywhere in the Scripture to speak of the cleansing word, the test being therefore that of the Word of God, which contains death for the sinner but

life for the saved. The bitter drink proved the guilt or innocence of the accursed. If guilty, swelling, rotting, and an outcast were the result. But it falsely accused health, fruitfulness and restoration to favor.

Therefore the same test applied brought different results, according to the guilt or innocence of the tested. The searching waters were eagerly quaffed by the innocent, but with a fearful looking for the coming death by the guilty.

So God's word searches us thoroughly, bringing cleansing to those who are true to Him, but death and despair to the unrepentant guilty.

God himself is a jealous God and will by no means spare the guilty, but the same test applied to His own, vindicates them, while it destroys the wicked.

He says of Israel that she had broken her vows to Jehovah her husband and the bitter test has been applied, proving her guilty of unfaithfulness. Therefore is she outcast from the presence of her Lord. And it will take with her as with us a new birth of repentance and tears and blood before she can be restored to favor.

THE NAZARITE VOW

The next law given was in regard to the Nazarite vow. And here we find many interesting and instructive lessons.

The Word Nazarite tells the story, the meaning being "one separated," and was applied to either a man or a woman wholly separated unto God.

The requirements were all voluntary and were three: not to drink of wine, or even to eat of the fruit of the vine, either in grapes or in raisins; not to allow a razor to touch the hair; not to touch a dead body, even of ones nearest and dearest. All this indicated a peculiar devotion to God and to His service in which even natural things were set aside in order to have

a more consecrated life and a closer communion with God.

The Nazarite in abstaining from wine practically displayed a love for God and the things of God which was above mere natural joy. Wine is spoken of in the Scriptures as making glad the heart of man, and the Nazarite proclaimed to the world his higher joy which he found in God's service.

To us this is set forth in Eph. 5:18, where the Holy Spirit is to fill us with all joy in believing.

Long hair was always considered a reproach to a man and was therefore a very humbling thing for him to wear.

1 Cor. 11:14.

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

This voluntary humility therefore proved his willingness to bear reproach for Jehovah's sake.

Today we are called to be Nazarites for God in this world. We are to be of those who find their highest joy in God's service, who willingly bear reproach for Christ's sake, and who allow no human ties to keep us from our uninterrupted service for Him.

In Samson we see the fidelity of God in granting him his super-human strength so long as he kept his Nazarite vow of separation, in spite of his terrible failures and sins. God is faithful.

2 Tim. 2:13.

13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

But of course we see the type perfectly fulfilled in our Lord Himself, who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and who allowed no natural human claim to hinder or divert Him from His unique work.

Jno. 2:4.
4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

Luke 2:49.
49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Matt. 26:29.
29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

He bore reproach for our sake and had no home, no family, no children that He might make a home for us and bring many sons into glory.

Ps. 69:7, 20.
7 Because for thy sake I have borne reproach: shame hath covered my face.
20 Reproach hath broken my heart and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

Luke 9:58.
58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Heb. 12:2.
2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Heb. 2:10.
10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

The lessons for us are most clear and searching. Here in the keeping of the vow of the Nazarite was no question of his **salvation.** No; that was assured by the offerings which he brought. It was entirely a question of **communion.**

A separation from things which were not in themselves sinful, but a separation which was a special

dedication of the whole man to God. This is what many fail to see, and failing to see it, confuse their salvation with their service and become hopelessly at sea.

Let us get it clear according to the Scriptures once for all. Salvation is the gift of God given to every true believer who accepts His Son Jesus Christ as personal substitute and Saviour. In the old dispensation this faith was represented by the offering of the appointed sacrifices. This gift brings to the recipient eternal life, which is the very life of God implanted and therefore ineradicable.

But personal communion with God, enjoyment of His fellowship and satisfaction in His service are totally different things and depend upon obedience and separation.

It is clearly set forth in shadow form in the lesson before us where the one desiring above all earthly gain that closer walk with God, which Enoch had, and Moses had, and David had, and every devoted child of God has had at some time during his earthly history; an unbroken communion with the Father.

The cost of this is the giving up of what men—natural men—hold dear; not monasticism or asceticism, as some have taught, but a heart separation which does not allow even a trifle to draw us away from our fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

For an ordinary man it was quite right to drink wine and shave and prepare the dead for burial. For the Nazarite it would have been all wrong. We see this taught in its fuller light in

Rom. 14:8, 17, 21-23.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any

thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

But we might ask, suppose the Nazarite vow was broken, either by a willful act or by an accident; what then?

Well, the mercy of God provided for that. A dead body might fall at the Nazarite's side, touching him against his will. It broke the vow, nevertheless, for the touch of death **was** defilement. Sin is sin in God's sight and must be dealt with as such, whether we wilfully sin or are accidentally tripped into it. It took, you will see, the blood of the atonement to cleanse the defiled Nazarite; and all had to be begun again.

So every sin must be confessed and cleansed. John explains this in

1 John 1:9, 10.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 John 2:1

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Here in this world the separation of the Christian has often been soiled and he must come back to the same altar of sacrifice and plead the same blood of atonement; not this time for **separation,** but for **restoration.**

Surely none of us realize that the tiniest speck of sin defiles and it cost Christ all He had to suffer to be able to cleanse us from it. This ought to make us guard our walk and conversation in this world with the more earnest care.

The last fact regarding the Nazarite is given in the completion of his vow, when all being accomplished, the hair is cut and sacrificed on the altar to God, wine can be drunk and he is free to go even amongst the dead without defilement.

What does this mean? Surely that the day is coming when our life of toil and separation, our time of reproach and humiliation for Christ's sake, will be ended and the very sign of this reproach will be forever done away with.

We then with Christ as overcomers will sit down to the feast prepared and enjoy the pleasures awaiting us through all eternity. Then will be fulfilled the words of the Apostle.

Heb. 12:11.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Mark 14:25.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

Is. 25:6.

6 And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

Rev. 21:1, 4-7.

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son.

THE GIFTS OF THE PRIESTS.

The 7th chapter, the longest one with the exception of Psalm 119, in the Bible, containing 89 verses, is entirely taken up with the gifts which were now brought to the Tabernacle by the Princes or Heads of the Tribes.

These offerings were voluntary and quite distinct from the former offerings brought for the building and furnishing of the Tabernacle.

We marvel to read the repetition of each specific gift over and over again in this chapter. Had we been writing the account we would soon have tired of it and lumped the gifts as well as the names. Not so the Holy Spirit. Every name of every donor is precious in God's sight, no matter how small, receives its full notice. God loves a cheerful giver. Every act of devotion, of sacrifice, of free will offering, is accepted and a record kept.

God never tires of us or our gifts. He urges our giving not for His sake, for the silver and gold are His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills,

Ps. 50:12.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fulness thereof.

but for our sakes.

Mal. 3:10.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

It is worth while to notice here in the arrangement of the gifts that only the Gershonites and Merarites

were given wagons and oxen, while the Kohathites had none; and the reason is plain.

The boards and hangings of the Tabernacle might be placed upon wagons drawn by oxen when Israel was on the march. But to the Kohathites was entrusted the sacred ark and the vessels of gold which God required to be carried upon their own shoulders—shoulders that had been anointed for this high honor.

This explains the terrible disaster which befell when David essayed to bring up the ark of the Lord of Jerusalem and Uzzah lost his life through disobedience to God's direct command.

1 Chron. 13:9-10.

9 And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

10 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

Only God's anointed could carry God's holy things, and that only in the way appointed. The heathen could place the Ark on an ox-cart and no ill befall. They had never had God's instructions regarding it, but it was Israel's business to know God's will and do it, because to them that will had been declared. So for us. If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them.

Jas. 4:17.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

God has given us the fuller light of the Gospel and it is our duty as well as our privilege to understand His commands.

Surely it is of inestimable comfort here to find God's record of it being kept in His Book of remembrance for countless generations to read.

What an astonishment it must have been to these

princes one day to read the minute list of their gifts. What an astonishment it will be perhaps to us some day to find a minute record kept in the books of the gifts of our love whether big or little.

Surely it is joy to know that each one has his special place on the roll, his special place in the Master's heart, and that all will some day receive its proper recognition.

Many an un-noticed alabaster box is even now being broken and is ascending as sweet perfume to Him whose chief joy is in the gifts of love and sacrifice which His own bring to Him.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON II.

CLEANSING THE CAMP.

1. Describe leprousy and tell why it is the clearest type of sin in the Bible?
2. Explain the law of jealousy and the reason for its severity.
3. Apply its teaching to Israel and also to all believers.
4. Explain the Nazarite vow and its spiritual meaning.
5. Give example of God's faithfulness in regard to it.
6. Who are the Nazarites today and in what respects?
7. Explain significance of its completion.
8. Name the one chapter in the Bible longer than the seventh of Numbers.
9. Explain reason for minuteness of detail here and the comfort for us.
10. Explain reason for different methods permitted in carrying the sacred things and give some dire results for disobedience.

DIVISION I.

LESSON III.

THE LIGHT. THE LAMB.
THE CLOUD. THE TRUMPETS.

Part I.

THE LIGHT. THE LAMB. THE CLOUD. THE TRUMPETS.

Chapters 8 to 10

In chapter 8 we find the candlesticks of the Tabernacle receiving all the attention. No other vessel is mentioned and the lesson is obvious because the Light was the prominent feature of the Tabernacle—outside of the Ark—and was representative of Christ who alone gives light and glory.

The light of the world is Jesus, and He alone supplies the light for His worship, His church, His people. He is the central shaft of beaten gold. And did He not give His back to the smiters in order to become this light? and does not all glory spring from Him and reflect upon Him, as here it did representatively!

The Gospel is clearly shown all through the Old Testament typology and nowhere more clearly than in the teaching of the Tabernacle and its appurtenances.

After the Light appeared then came the command to keep the Passover. The Lamb was slain according to all the laws regarding it, which were fully explained in Leviticus.

Suffice it here to say, after the Light comes Redemption. The Light came into the World and the Light was also the Lamb.

Here we find the Levites cleansed for their holy work by washing and shaving—types of cleansing by the Word and cutting off of all that offends in our lives in order that we who bear the vessel of the Lord may be holy as He commands.

Then when all had been done according to the Word of the Lord, the satisfaction of God was shown in the covering cloud and guiding pillar of fire.

God is always well pleased when we carry out His commands, and His guidance and protection are assured to those who obey. The clouds and the pillar were the visible signs to Israel of His shepherding care by day and His guarding care by night. So long as they remained stationary Israel abode in her tents; when the cloud and the pillar moved forward Israel pitched her tents and followed after. So step by step, not knowing what a day would bring forth, her path was marked out for her by her guide.

How true all this is in the daily guidance promised the faithful child of God. The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord. He shall choose our inheritance for us. He leadeth me. What comfort to know that we like Israel have a personal hourly supervision and are as clearly guided by His Word and His voice and need have no fear, but follow as He may direct.

"He leadeth me! O blessed tho't
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where e'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur or repine,
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me,

And when my task on earth is done,
When, by Thy grace, the vict'ry's won,
E'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
Since God thro' Jordan leadeth me."

But beside the cloud and the pillar Israel had another token of the guidance of Jehovah in the silver trumpets which Moses was now ordered to make.

The trumpets were each to be made of one piece of

silver. Silver typically symbolizes redemption and the single piece typifies the unity of God's testimony.

Only the redeemed are summoned by God's voice to war for Him. And only the anointed ear is tuned to hear His voice when it speaks.

The trumpets were two in number and two is the witness number throughout Scripture. From the mouth of two or three witnesses a thing was established. God the Son and God the Holy Ghost witness to the truth of God's word. So when the trumpets sounded it was a true command, and when the word of God speaks it is equally a true command.

Two is also the number of the Second Person of the Trinity, the Son; and so it is as Christ speaking to Israel for God, when the trumpets blew, and when God would speak to the world He sent His Word, and the Holy Ghost witnessed to the truth of the Testimony.

Jno. 1:1.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Jno. 1:32, 33.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

No movement could take place in the camp of Israel which was not authorized by the sound of the trumpets. They called to war, to hear instruction, to gather for the feasts. Each Israelite was instructed in the language of the trumpets and understood from them his orders. It was simply a question of obedience. The trumpets gave no uncertain sound and represent to us Divine authority.

Thus saith the Lord. Our error is that without

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waiting God's call we rush ahead or hearing it stand still and refuse to move.

The Weakness of His Plan.—And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand (Matt. 7:26). A young Bohemian in the Latin Quarter was talking gaily to a group of kindred spirits one night. "My only rule for life," he said, "is to have no rule. Whenever a rule lifts its head I smite it. Whenever anything is forbidden I do it. When I cannot think of anything interesting to do I find some commandment to break." One of the party, a hard-headed fellow, who was never so happy as when he was being cynical about cynicism, broke in at this point with one telling sentence: "The only trouble with breaking the Commandments," he said, "is that if you keep doing it in the long run they break you."

Before judging Israel for her blindness and deafness and stubborness, as we study her history, let us search our own hearts and ask if we are any keener to listen to the voice of God or any quicker to obey.

All was in readiness now in Israel's camp in the wilderness. The Tabernacle had been set up according to the pattern given Moses in the Mount. All had been cleansed and instructed according to God's Word. The Passover Lamb had been sacrificed. The Candlestick poured forth its Divine light. The Pillar and the Cloud hovered overhead like a sheltering bird. The Trumpets had been cast and their clear ringing notes could be heard out over Israel's host. Every man knew his place and his task. Each had his standard going before as his guide, and the Ark was in their midst to direct and protect them. All they had to do was to keep rank and follow their guide into the promised land. But they did not go.

What was wrong? Well, the whole book of Numbers tells the sorrowful story. They could not enter in because of unbelief.

DIVISION I.

LESSON IV.

FROM SINAI TO KADESH BARNEA.

Part II.

FROM SINAI TO KADESH BARNEA.

Murmuring.

Chapter 11.

As we found chapters 1 to 9 showing God's dealing with His people, we now find chapters 11 to 21 showing man's murmuring against God. In the Book of Numbers alone there are eight distinct murmurings and rebellions. Truly this was a stiffnecked and rebellious people. Man's rebellion, failure and defeat are shown throughout the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation.

If you will trace this carefully you will find not one instance anywhere of man of himself being a success. It is the fashion today, and, in fact, has ever been the fashion, for man to laud himself, boast of his achievements, point to his inventions and glorify himself and his works. Not so God. Everywhere in God's sight according to His Holy Word, God has pronounced him a failure, a rebel, a creature unable by nature to achieve anything of satisfaction to God.

Read Romans, first chapter. That is God's mirror, showing man as he is and has ever looked in God's sight.

Then look at God's picture book of man as shown throughout all Scripture.

In Eden, in the freshness of innocence, under the slightest imaginable test, man failed.

In the cleansed earth man again rebelled and reared a tower in defiance of God.

In the wilderness, as we are now studying, after the most signal marks of God's power and favor, rebellion, murmuring and disobedience are man's answer to God's love. Israel just out of Egypt made the golden

calf. Aaron's sons offered strange fire in the sacred Tabernacle. And now they all murmur and bring down judgment on themselves.

In the Church Christ warns us the same spirit will manifest itself, and that when He comes it will be so manifest as to make Him spew it out of His mouth, not as so many teach today to praise it for its advice and success.

Read Rev. 3:16.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

And even in the millennium, when Satan is loosed after his thousand years imprisonment, it is to find rebellious spirits among men ready again to rally around his standard and oppose Almighty God and His Anointed King.

Truly all this ought to make us humble suppliants for God's mercy, not arrogant approvers of our own deeds. The only act man can perform to the pleasing of the Father is to believe His Word both as regards himself as a sinner and as regards Christ as the only Saviour. With this God is well pleased.

First complaint. Of the way. Had Israel trusted all would have been well. But no sooner is all in readiness for the forward march than we read the people complained.

What were they complaining about? They had water from the Rock; they had manna from heaven; they had the presence of God in their midst; they had visible sign of daily and hourly guidance. Their feet never swelled on the march; their clothes and their shoes never waxed old. What was wrong?

Well, just what is wrong with us when we complain. Their hearts were not right towards God and their hearts therefore lusted after worldly things. And as a man thinketh in his heart so is he. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Before we condemn Israel too severly let us search our own hearts and see if there be any evil way in us.

Read most carefully

1 Cor. 10:5-10.

5 But with many of them God was not pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Ps. 95:8-11.

8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Heb. 3:15 to Heb. 4:11.

15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

1 Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said,

As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

These Scriptures tell the whole story. All is written to warn, to admonish, to restrain, to enlighten us.

The whole trouble started with a few complaints in the camp and flew like wildfire until the whole was infected.

The most solemn lesson for us perhaps is that complaining at circumstances is for the child of God complaining against God. Alas! how often we forget this. The commonest sin of the average Christian perhaps is a spirit of fault finding. The weather, our food, our surroundings, our tasks, our troubles, our losses, our misfortunes, all become the subject of our complaints, and while we would not dare accuse God to His face for permitting these things, we scold Him indirectly by our fault finding with them, because behind every event in our lives stands God, sending or permitting these things for our ultimate good.

All this is sin, and is the entering wedge of far deeper and more dreadful experiences. God loves a thankful heart. I rather suspect the reason many of our

requests receive no response is because of our neglect of the command to make them with thanksgiving.

Phil. 4:6.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Eph. 5:20.

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ps. 100:4.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

Indeed, in this grace we may learn something from our four-footed friends.

Bishop Doane writes of his dog—

I am quite sure he thinks I am God—
Since He is God on whom each one depends
For life, and all things that His bounty sends—
My dear old dog, most constant of all friends;
Not quick to mind, but quicker far than I
To Him whom God I know and own; his eye,
Deep brown and liquid, watches for my nod;
He is more patient underneath the rod
Than I, when God His wise corrections sends.
He looks love at me, deep as words e'er spake;
And from me never crumb or sup will take
But he wags thanks with his most vocal tail;
And when some crashing noise wakes all his fear
He is content and quiet if I'm near,
Secure that my protection will prevail;
So, faithful, mindful, thankful, trustful, he
Tells me what I unto my God should be.

Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

We are given one of the secrets of the complaining in the fact that Israel had a host of camp followers in the mixed multitude which followed on from Egypt. These people were not Israelites but for one reason or another followed them and were hinderers and temp-

ters to them, as all hangers-on to the church are to us today.

It is the mixed multitude **in** but not **of** the church that causes so much of worldliness in Scriptural practices and complaining, complaining of the old-fashioned obedience to the mere word of God.

These hangers-on vexed Israel in the wilderness as later the heathen nations spared by them contrary to the command of God became thorns and pricks in their side in the promised land. We are called to a life of separation, for anything less pulls us down.

Second complaint. Of food. Now what did the people want? They wanted the leeks and onions and the garlic of Egypt. So much they wanted this spicy food that they determined to choose a new leader who would take them back so they could get it.

They forgot that with the leeks and the onions went the taskmaster's lash; that while they could drink water from the rock and eat the bread of heaven as God's free men, leeks and onions could only be eaten as slaves, with a tale of brick to be made for every meal.

We who have been emancipated by the precious blood of Christ are never to forget that we were slaves to sin, bond slaves to Satan, that the spice of the world was eaten under the yoke of a wicked and evil taskmaster.

Now we are given the Water of life, the true Bread from Heaven. Oh, my friends, let us take warning from Israel and shut our hearts and our minds to the old world call, remembering from whence we were digged and by what a costly price, even the precious blood of the Lamb.

Even Moses fails under this severe test and joins in the general murmuring when he says to God: "Wherefore hast thou afflicted me? Have I conceived all this people? Shall I have flesh to give unto all this people?"

My, oh my, can this be the same Moses who was with God forty days in the Mount?

Well, Moses here is like every one who begins to talk to God in the first person. Here it is "me" and "I" very conspicuous and God entirely lost sight of. Moses, like Elijah and Jonah and many others, desires a juniper tree in order that he may get under it and be allowed to die because he forsooth is not equal to the occasion.

Surely Jehovah had no faithful servant until our blessed Lord came. All have sinned and come short.

Moses as well as Israel now had to be disciplined, and because he fainted under his responsibilities, taking his eyes off Jehovah and putting them on circumstances, just as later Peter did when he essayed to walk the water, so God released him of his burden, and divided it with the 70 elders, who had nothing more wherewith to judge Israel than Moses had from God for they were only tools of the same Spirit that was upon Moses. So Moses by complaining lost some of his glory and inaugurated a system of rulers for Israel which resulted in the set of men who crucified our Lord later on. Have you ever noticed that?

We now have one of the most solemn lessons in the whole Bible. God granted their request but sent leanness into the soul.

Ps. 106:15.

15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

Oh my soul wait thou only upon God.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Heb. 10:30, 31.

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The people cried for flesh; their soul loathed the manna. Moses cried for deliverance; all complained at God's provision. God heard and **granted** their request.

Flesh they should have; they trusted Him not, loved Him not, were not content with His wisdom and love in providing for them. Very well; they should have what they desired—and its consequent result.

Quails fell. Night and day low-flying coveys swept over the camp, falling exhausted and being easily captured. The people rejoiced greatly; captured hastily; cooked eagerly; ate greedily. Flesh was boiled, roast, baked. Meal after meal, until they could eat no more. And still they fell!

But Israel lay sick—sick of quails—broken out with a blood disease caused by eating too much flesh. Men were dying everywhere, broken out with boils, crying now for the water they had so lately refused.

Burning now with a fever induced by their own lusts, consumed now with a loathing for what they had lusted. What a picture of the result of fleshly indulgence. God requires no unwilling servants. If our soul loathes the pure water of the Word and the true Manna, the Bread from Heaven, even Jesus Christ, we are not compelled to feed upon them.

God offers His best. But if we refuse, complain and cry for the fulfillment of our own lustful desires, He will grant our request and we must bear the consequences; and they are indeed fearful. With Israel their dead bodies testified to their sin. To me the most dangerous thing a Christian can do is to **tease** God for something God thinks wise to withhold.

To complain at the cruelty of God when He says "No" to prayers that would bring discord, death and disaster upon us were He to grant them. I often think in this respect of the following little incident which illustrates the point.

A little boy travelling on the train, one day, with his Mother and nurse was whining and crying until the Mother who was immersed in a novel said petulantly to the nurse; "Do give Bobby what he wants and make him keep quiet." A few moments after a loud shriek pierced the ears of the other passengers and the startled Mother demanded of the nurse what the trouble was, to which the nurse quietly replied, "He wanted the wasp on the window sill, Madam, and as you told me to give him what he was crying for, I let him have it."

I know of a few such cases and quote them here that we may take warning and learn to say "Thy will be done" to all our requests.

A mother stood beside the crib of a dying child, a beautiful girl baby, and defied God to take her from her; demanded at no matter what cost the life of this child; and God granted her request. She lived to grow up a beautiful girl, highly educated, of a cultured, refined family and the pride of the household. But when she was grown she went into the paths of sin and brought dishonor and shame on all around her, and lived to have her father curse the day she was born and her mother realize that was the price she had made herself responsible for when God in His wisdom and mercy would have taken her innocent baby to Himself.

Another mother sat in her lonely home rebelling over the death of her little son. A neighbor came in and found her thus and then lifted the veil from her own heart, saying, "You ought to rejoice that your little lamb is safe in the fold. Would God mine were there. I have brought up seven sons and lived to visit every one of them in a jail or a penitentiary."

God knows what is best and often what seems hardest for us at the time is His mercy for us in the end. You say these are extreme cases. Granted. But they are true and the lesson for us is to trust Him at all

times, pour out our hearts before Him and ever say to all our requests, "Not my will but Thine be done."

Chapter 12

THIRD COMPLAINT

Jealousy

The third cause of complaint was with their leaders. Moses' wife becomes the cause of jealousy and contention between Miriam and Aaron, Moses' sister and brother.

This wife did not please them. Few brothers' wives do. They complained that she was an Ethiopian. Whether this wife was Kohath's daughter or some other we are not told. Evidently they thought her beneath their family. This, too, is a very human position for the in-laws to take.

Whether being an Ethiopian implied that she was black I do not know, but in Miriam's and Aaron's eyes she was black indeed, and they resented her position as Moses' wife and her influence over him. It is all so very, very human, and it must be put here for our instruction, the first of which would seem to be that it is a dangerous thing for any one to meddle in family matters. She was Moses' wife. She was entitled to her position simply from her relationship to him.

As far as the record shows she never did anything to bring Miriam's wrath down upon her head. If she influenced Moses that was only natural and her prerogative, and we are nowhere told that she influenced him in a wrong way. In fact, from God's vindication of her and her position we have every right to infer quite the opposite. The only result of the persecution is God's vindication of Moses and his wife.

Moses referred the whole matter to God, and that is

the only safe place for calumny and family quarrels to be referred. "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." If we attempt the judging and disciplining of one another God will let us do it. But like Miriam, we will only find that we have brought leprousy upon ourselves and become outcasts.

The sin of course went much deeper than a mere family quarrel, a complaint against the wife of Moses. There was in Miriam's breast and Aaron's too, envy and jealousy of Moses' great and exalted position. Miriam and Aaron were both older than Moses, and Miriam had played the part of an elder sister in their youth, as her watch by the little bulrush basket testified. It was hard now to see this baby brother with all the honor and distinction of his exalted position. So the seeds of envy grew until they flowered in complaint, and mark you, complaint against the Lord's anointed.

Paul it is who reminds us that speaking evil against dignitaries and those in authority is speaking against God, and therefore sin.

So in Miriam's case the sin of the heart was allowed to show on the surface and the leprousy which was latent now became manifest to all, and death would have been the result had not Moses become her intercessor; but through his prayers her life was saved.

Discipline she had to bear, but she was saved by the intervention of the very one she had tried to injure. So we see a little gleam of gold in this dark scene, and, a flashlight of the same gospel of "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" which radiated from the cross and from Stephen's martyred lips later.

We may perhaps wonder that only Miriam was here punished and not Aaron as well. But the fact that Aaron was High Priest, and because of the honor attached to the office, God may have spared him here

a public discipline on account of the people. That he was punished we know later, because he was not allowed to enter the promised land, but like Moses, while yet strong and able for service, he was stripped of his robes and office and they were placed upon another and he himself had to die with the rebellious generation who because of unbelief could not enter it.

Typically we can see in Moses' Ethiopian wife a picture of the Church, the Bride, a stranger from a foreign or Gentile land—envied and persecuted by Israel, the elder brother.

In the Songs of Solomon 1:5, 6, 15

5 I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

6 Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

15 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.

she too is denounced as black, but Christ says of her she is fair and comely, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Some day all who speak against her will be judged by God.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON III AND IV.

1. Describe The Light—The Lamb—The Cloud—The Trumpets.
2. Give spiritual application of each to Israel and to us.
3. Name the first murmuring of the children of Israel and God's discipline for it.
4. Apply to Christians of today.
5. Name the second cause of complaint and accompanying result.
6. Give illustrations of danger of getting what we want from God.
7. Name third cause of complaint and God's answer.
8. Compare with the true bride—The Church.

DIVISION II.

LESSON V.

FAILURE THROUGH UNBELIEF.

FAILURE THROUGH UNBELIEF.

ISRAEL'S OPPORTUNITY.

Chapters 13—15.

The Land.

We come now to the dividing line of the book of Numbers. Arrived at a mountain-top peak Israel can look over the rich fields and fruitful vineyards of the land promised so long ago to their father Abraham, and ready now to to be handed over to them.

Fields that they had not tilled, vineyards that they had not planted, houses that they had not built, were all waiting for their occupancy.

Those in possession, the Canaanites, Hivites, etc., were judged of God to be unworthy to continue their existence. The cup of their iniquity, He says was full. It remained but for judgment to fall and all with which they had been entrusted to be given to another. The unbelieving caviller here finds enormous fault with God's dealing with the children of men. The worldly man thinks he or any other man has a **right** to his possessions; that he has earned or won them.

Not so. God has loaned them for a purpose and for a time only. All the earth is His, the gold and the silver, the cattle on a thousand hills. No man can call any thing **his.**

Ps. 75:7.

7 But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

Rom. 9:21.

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?

Dan. 4:35.

35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing:

and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

I have heard men presumptuously criticize the drowning of the swine in the time of our Lord's life, when the demons destroyed them, saying Jesus had destroyed other men's property. To this there is but one answer: Jesus is Lord of the cattle and has a right to do as He pleases with His own.

So in the case before us. Study the beginnings and course of these races and see what a menace to the human race they were. The land of Canaan was God's land long before the Canaanites, Hivites and other nations took possession of it. They had had their testing and were found wanting; the time had come for it to be wrested from their grasp and to be given to whomsoever the Lord would.

But if the Canaanites did not want to give it up, neither apparently did Israel want to take it over. There it lay at their feet; they had but to put foot upon it and every foot trodden by them was theirs for an everlasting possession. But they hesitated and drew back. The difficulties loomed larger than the opportunities.

The Spies.

The first evidence of their mistrust of God is in their sending in spies to spy out the land. Why send spies when God has already given them a report of what it contained?

Unbelief. They did not believe God's bald word. They wanted to see. Oh, but you say, God said "Send men that they may search the land." So it **must** have been all right to do so.

Not at all. It was another case of yielding to their own wrong demands. Later God gave them a king—Saul, in answer to their insistence; but they brought

disaster on the nation then as they are doing now by rejecting their rightful king. God gave them their request but it kept them forty years out of the land.

Deut. 1:22-26

22 And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.

23 And the saying pleased me well: and I took twelve men of you, one of a tribe:

24 And they turned and went up into the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and searched it out.

25 And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us.

26 Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God:

tells the real story.

Twelve men are selected to spy out the land, and after making a successful trip return with the spoils of their visit, fruit so large and luscious that it must be carried on staffs between the shoulders of two men. Signal proof of the fertility of their new country. But with the big grapes comes the disquieting news of equally big giants.

The Report.

Giants prepared to dispute their ownership of the grapes. Cities with walls of stone surrounding them. The number of witnesses against the venture are ten; two only remain faithful witnesses for God.

The Unbelief.

All that the ten report they say is true. There are mighty men of renown in possession of the land—giants truly from the human standpoint—giants that made the Israelites look like grasshoppers in comparison. It were death to try to take the land from

them. Better turn back and fight for a bare existence in the wilderness than venture against giants, entrenched behind stone walls, in a fertile land. It looked like death either way, and weeping and lamenting and wrath and anger against Moses and Aaron were the result.

So men today make their calculations methodically, practically, arithmetically, prudently, according to the sight of their eyes and the hearing of their ears, and because they leave God out of the calculations altogether, the answer is always wrong. So Philip calculated the resources and the demand omitting the Lord and His power to supply.

There were giants; there were walled cities; there would be war; but God was with Israel, and God was not with the uncircumcised Philistines, and that was what made all the difference in the calculations.

Who was David, a stripling lad of 17, of no military experience, to go against a trained warrior of giant size, encased in an unassailable brazen armor? Nothing, alone. A mere boy to be made mince-meat of by the superior human giant. But David with God was invulnerable. It was God who caused Goliath to bare his swelling head. It was God who winged David's stone to the vulnerable spot. It was God who gave David strength to swing the giant's great sword and destroy him with the very weapon on which he had relied and of which he had bragged.

So, had Israel like David gone up in the strength of the Lord, all would have been well.

The Punishment.

Later, frightened by Moses' terrible arraignment of them and their sins, they attempt, in defiance now of God's disapproval, to go up in their own strength, and meet with a signal and terrifying defeat.

Surely the lessons for us are obvious. When God

says go it is the only time for us to go and be assured of victory. Alone, Satan can and will defeat us every time. Our day of opportunity comes indeed with winged feet. Seized under God's guidance it wafts us to victory sure and swift.

Let pass, it turns to disaster and defeat and never comes with just that face again.

> Truly of all sad words of tongue or pen
> The saddest are these, It might have been.

To how many hereafter will these neglected and spurned opportunities come back to chide and shame us, for we, as Israel of old, so often refuse to advance because there are giants in the way. A Sculptor once modeled a superb statue of a young woman with veiled face and winged feet which he named Opportunity—When asked why the veil? he replied "because so seldom recognized" but why the wings? "because when not seized quickly gone forever never to return."

Two witnesses remained true—Joshua and Caleb. They said "We **are** able." God is in the midst of us. Only go up. We are able to overcome the giants and rid the land of them forever."

But what are two faithful souls in a multitude of faithless ones? The majority, though usually wrong, nevertheless rules. But thank God, while they could compel Joshua and Caleb to turn back with them against their will, they could not bring the same punishment upon them that they themselves suffered, namely, death in the wilderness.

God preserved His faithful witnesses and caused them and them alone to walk triumphant into the land thirty-eight years later, and there gave them the reward of their faithfulness, which had been laid up for them all these years.

Num. 32:11, 12.

11 Surely none of the men that came out of Egypt, from twen-

ty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me:

12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the Lord.

Deut. 1:35, 36-38.

35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers,

36 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord.

37 Also the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither.

38 But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

Surely it is a comfort for us to have here given the assurance that even if the whole church sin against the command of the Lord, yet if any individual in the church remain true to the word, God notices and rewards, and no amount of misunderstanding or weary wandering of the church as a whole will keep the faithful ones from their assigned possessions when the time of distribution comes.

Moses' character shines forth in all the greater brilliance because of the utter blackness of the nation against which he is seen. With the spirit of true devotion and as a genuine intercessor he pleads the promises and offers his own life for the life of his erring nation.

He nobly rejects God's offer to make of his own family a glorious name at the expense of his people and his bringing to God's remembrance the covenants and promises is just what God most desires His people to do. It is on God's word that we dare take our stand and it is on His own word that He has sworn to hear and answer.

Here we are on safe ground—the Solid Rock. To remind God of the exultation of the heathen over His

chosen people should they fail to accomplish that which they declared they had set out to do, would also reflect on God's power, and Moses cannot bear to think that an uncircumcized Egyptian could think his God unable or unwilling to accomplish His task. All this God of course knew, but is well pleased to see that His servant knows it too. And so in answer to Moses' intercession and sacrifice a new covenant is made and the punishment mitigated.

God's word is kept, in that not one of this rebellious generation save the two faithful ones, Joshua and Caleb, enter the land. Thirty-eight years later Israel enters in the sons of the new generation. And so God's will is accomplished and His Word kept inviolate.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON V.

Failure through unbelief.

1. What made the dividing line in Israel's history?
2. Explain God's dealings with the Canaanites, etc.
3. Give illustration from Scripture.
4. State reasons why the sending of spies was dishonoring to God.
5. Give their report and its effect upon the people.
6. Explain failure of their later attempt to enter the land.
7. Give illustration of opportunity.
8. Show God's faithfulness to the faithful spies in the end.
9. Apply to present day faithful believers.

DIVISION III.

LESSON VI.

THE NEW GENERATION.

Part I.

THE NEW GENERATION.

Chapters 15—33.

Prophecy.

It seems a strange thing to us, that right in the face of Israel's failure and direct disobedience, God should give them directions as to their offerings when they should possess the land.

Just before He had pronounced judgment upon them, denying any of that generation (save his two faithful witnesses Joshua and Caleb) entrance into the land, and yet immediately He proclaims to Moses—the laws that are to govern them after they enter, even though this entrance is by their disobedience postponed thirty-eight years.

We see in this that what God says **will be done** is as **good as done.** Man may fail and turn back from his opportunity; God sees the end from the beginning and prophesies what will be the outcome. He has said of His Word, it shall accomplish that whereunto I have sent it, and in spite of the unbelief of the atheist and the attacks of the critics and the scorn of the scoffers every jot and tittle of the law shall be fulfilled. Man by his own weakness or wickedness may delay God's blessings; he cannot change God's purpose.

So in grace God speaks to Israel, seeing after the years of weariness and wandering, after the discipline and training of the wilderness a new generation, willing to enter in under His guidance.

Israel's bones whitened the desert, as God had prophesied; yet Israel advanced upon the giants and the walled towns and conquered them too also, as God had prophesied.

Let those who sneeringly scoff at the prophecies of

God's judgments take notice and know that just as truly as God's mercies are sure in Christ Jesus so His judgments are sure for all who remain out of Christ.

The worldling says

2 Pet. 3:4.

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

To the wicked God says

Ps. 50:16, 17, 21.

16 But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

17 Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.

The fashion today everywhere, in the church and out of the church, is to contend only for the goodness of God. As long as God's love, God's mercy, God's forgiveness is preached men listen calmly; but the moment a voice of warning is raised or God's wrath against sin emphasized, or the judgments of God are proclaimed, protests rise from every side and judgment is brushed aside with contempt. Then those daring to point to this side of the word of God are looked upon as cruel and narrow and harsh and bigoted.

From some of the pictures drawn of God today from our pulpits He is more like a doddering old grandfather in his second childhood, too senile to punish any wrong doing, too doting to discipline, than the God of holiness, justice and truth pictured by Himself in His own word about Himself. As one old saint put it, the popular God today is a "God of gush."

Now no one really likes to point to the judgments of God. Every one greatly prefers to point to His

mercies. But the true teacher or preacher sticks by the **Word** and honors it. God says Himself of His judgments that they are His strange works; He delights in mercy.

God's word is truth. He does not hide nor deceive, and as there is a hell for all who reject His mercy, He has told us of it and sent His Son to make this clear and save us from it by the awful sacrifice of Himself in our stead. Our Lord mentions hell oftener than any other.

Mercy rejected brings wrath. Why should it not? Mercy is offered, but mercy **proves** that it is the only escape from judgment; therefore those who reject it receive the other thing—wrath and judgment.

Law breaking Chapters 15—32

The case of the stoning of the man in the chapter before us, who broke the law by gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, is a picture illustrative of this truth. For a law breaker, death is the penalty, and all Israel was here taught the inflexibility of law.

The man knew the law—law of death for not keeping the Sabbath unbroken—and he deliberately went against it, very possibly presuming on the goodness and love and mercy of God to wink at, or permit to go unpunished, his sin. Not so; wilful sin brought instant judgment.

The Sabbath to Israel was a sacred day, dedicated to God as a sign and seal of Israel's covenant relationship with Him. Not as other nations could they ignore or defy His laws. This was a flagrant case of either ignoring or defying His command and to His law-breakers death was necessary for the teaching of the whole nation that the soul that sinneth it shall surely die.

Oh, my friends, do not let us delude ourselves with the false teaching of the press and pulpit today, but let us study God's Word as to His truth about

judgment to come, and flee from this wrath while there is time.

Ps. 2:10-12.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Heb. 10:28-30.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

2 Pet. 3:9.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Rev. 22:16, 17.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

With every word of judgment in the Scriptures there is also the pleading invitation and the setting forth of the plan of salvation, and with every pleading invitation there is also the booming of the alarm bell warning off the rocks and shoals and telling of wrath to come. Both are true; both are sure.

The blue fringe.

In the command to Israel to place the blue fringe up-

on their garments we see the desire God had in mind of reminding them of their heavenly calling.

Their walk, with the blue fringe around it, was to be ever upwards. Pilgrims through the wilderness they were to walk as strangers who desire a better country, even a heavenly.

So with the commands upon their heads and hands in the phylacteries ordered to be bound upon them, and the heavenly blue fringe guarding their steps, they were truly a marked people, and others were to observe their separation and distinction.

Their walk and coversation was to be as becometh saints.

The lessons for us need hardly be mentioned. We have His mark upon our foreheads and are to show the heavenly character of our walk through this world, keeping our garments unspotted from the flesh.

QUESTIONS ON LESSONS VI AND VII

The New Generation.

Rebellion.

1. Give proof of the positiveness of God's prophecies.
2. Of God's inflexible nature and law.
3. Explain reason for and spiritual meaning of the blue fringe on Israel's garments and its sign to us.
4. State the fifth murmuring of Israel against God and its consequences.
5. Give the New Testament reference to Korah's sin and its punishment.
6. Name the sixth murmuring and its result.
7. Give illustration of rejection of God's Word without regeneration.
8. State underlying reason for restraint or punishment.
9. Give the cure for the sin and an illustration of God's two attributes—Judgment and Mercy.

DIVISION III.

LESSON VII.

THE REBEL KORAH.

Part I.

THE REBEL KORAH.

Chapter 16.

Fifth—Murmuring. Rebellion against Divinely appointed authority.

This made the fifth **murmuring**—against the priesthood. In the 16th chapter we have a long and detailed account of the rebellion of one of the sons of Levi and the terrible and summary judgment which fell.

The sin was a specially heinous one as it was committed by an anointed official, a minister of the sanctuary, and was the same sin which brought leprosy on Miriam and later slew our Lord at the hands of the Jewish elders—the **sin of envy.**

Korah was not satisfied with his rank and high office, but aspired to the High Priesthood itself, and not only sinned in his heart but spread his sin abroad until he had a group of followers numbering two hundred and fifty men.

So grows a tiny seed of jealousy or envy in the human breast. It is a viper nourished in the bosom, whose sting is death.

There is a story told of a snake charmer who trained a tiny snake from babyhood to curl around his arm and eat from his hand. Gradually as the snake grew the coils reached further and further around the man until his whole body was wrapped by his pet. This went on for years until one day in the midst of an exhibition the spectators were horror stricken to hear the bones of the man's body crack one by one as his pet snake squeezed him gradually to death in his venemous embrace. So sin nurtured and played with, in the end

strangles its helpless victim and there is no human help to disentangle its deadly coils.

The priests were divided. Some were on the Lord's side and some on Korah's. Moses did not attempt to deal with the situation in his own strength, but took it to the Lord and received from Him Divine instruction regarding it.

He commanded all the priests to appear before the door of the Tabernacle in full regalia, with the golden censers containing the holy incense in their hands. Then he spoke the word of the Lord to them, trying to draw them from their deadly sin, reminding them of their own high honor in that God had anointed them for His service, and trying to appeal to all that might still save them from the wrath to come.

But it was all useless; they only accused Moses of trying to "lord it over them" and to heap up riches for himself, an accusation which drew from him the simple dignified vindication of himself in the words, "Respect not thou their offerings, oh Lord. I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt them."

Seeing there was no hope of bringing them to repentance, Moses prepares to carry out the command of the Lord and orders a separation of the priests to take place. Those remaining true to Jehovah were to stand aside. Korah and his two hundred and fifty rebels were to remain together at the doors of their tents with their households. There was to be an exhibition of mercy for those who trusted God, and swift judgment for those who defied.

Moses makes this very clear in his speech, declaring that God has authorized all of his movements and that this will now be proved by a punishment such as no human hand could bring about.

A miracle is about to take place. If the earth opens and swallows these rebels the whole congregation will then know that this judgment is of the Lord. And

even while Moses spake the earth cracked with a loud noise and like quicksand sucked into its open mouth Korah and all of his families, with tents and all that appertained thereto, closing again over their heads like a filled-in grave.

The people fled shrieking to their tents, terrified at the awful scene they had just witnessed, and even while they fled fire fell from heaven and destroyed the two hundred and fifty false priests, leaving only the golden censers upon the ground to mark the spot where they had been standing.

God now commanded Moses to melt those two hundred and fifty censers into flat plates, to be placed upon the altar to make a golden covering which would be a perpetual reminder of the enormity of Korah's sin and the visitation from God which it brought upon them.

Truly our God is a consuming fire, and He will thoroughly cleanse His people and the whole world. Let sinners take heed and flee from the wrath to come.

Deut. 4:23, 24.

23 Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee.

24 For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

Mal. 3:2, 3.

2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.

1 Cor. 3:13.

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

Heb. 10:26, 27.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the

knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Heb. 12:25-29.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

In the New Testament Jude reminds us of Korah's or Core's sin and its swift punishment, liking it to the sin of Cain and Balaam.

Jude 11, 14, 15.

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

The Sixth Murmuring Against God's Judgment

But the judgment on the rebels did not eradicate the inborn and ingrowing sin of rebellion in Israel. In place of being warned by it they were merely terrified and indignant that God should punish at all, and especially that He should punish according to His own will. In place of repenting when they saw their own

wickedness they attempted to destroy those who had shown them the evil in their hearts.

It reminds us of an Indian who through a miscroscope was shown the germs in the water from the Ganges, and was told not to drink that water any more. He did not like the looks of the germs wriggling round in the water, so he took a heavy stick and broke the miscroscope and continued to drink the water. In place of mending their ways these people seek to destroy Moses and Aaron.

Truly the heart of man is rebellious always. We think we should decide upon the guilt and necessary punishment of others and do just as Israel did, murmuring at God's warnings and ways.

Punishment is not necessarily for the reformation of either the punished or the observer. It may bring about a change of heart, but even if it does not, it must fall as a sign of God's just displeasure against the sin.

Even in our human laws this is so. The punishment of the law-breaker is not so much for his reformation as for a vindication of the law which must not be broken with impunity. Many say, Abolish our jails and capital punishment as they do not change men's hearts. They are not meant to change men's hearts primarily. Jails are not reformatories; they are restrainers and vindicators. The law-breaker is restrained from continuing his evil ways and the righteousness of the law is vindicated. If these warn others from the same offense, well and good; but if not, they are continued just the same, and will fall equally on the next law-breaker.

Of course in human laws there is much miscarrying of justice, but not so in God's law; there all justice will be weighed, and justly meted out.

Is. 42:1, 21.

1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth, I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

21 The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.

Jno. 5:22.

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

1 Pet. 4:17.

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Rev. 20:12-15.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Rev. 21:6-8.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Intercessor.

It was Moses' intercession and Aaron's prayers in the form of the swinging golden censers that stayed the plague which God now sent upon the people for rebelling against His dealing with His servants.

Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and brings fiery judgment upon us when we allow it in our hearts. God's ways are past finding out. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? He is light; in Him is no darkness at all. All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth.

Though He slay me yet will I trust Him. The Lord is good to all and His tender mercies are over all works. What I know of God enables me to trust what I do not know:

Ps. 145:9.
9 The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

I may not understand all my Father's dealings as Judge and Governor of the universe, but I know my Father's heart and that He doeth all things well. Therefore will I trust when I cannot understand.

Someone has imagined a loving father who was also the Judge of the community being criticized to his little boy as cruel because he had sentenced a man to hang. If the boy really knew and loved his father he would answer "My father's judicial acts I am too young and too ignorant to understand, but my father's heart of love and mercy I know and whatever my father does is right, whether I can understand it or not." So with our Father's acts they are righteous altogether whether we understand them or not—some day we will understand.

DIVISION III.

LESSON VIII.

AARON'S ROD.

AARON'S ROD.

Chapter 17.

After the rebellion of Korah God took signal means to forever settle the question of the High Priesthood and so put an end to the envy and jealousy which had led to such disaster. While before this He had appointed through His word to Moses, Aaron to be the High Priest, He now gives a public indication of the appointment for all the people to see.

Telling Moses to bring the heads of the tribes to the Tabernacle, He there commands each prince to bring a dead rod to represent him, with his name engraved upon it, so each could be readily recognized. Moses was then to place the twelve rods in the Tabernacle before the Ark of the Testimony, and the one which sprang into life, bearing buds and flowers and fruits, the same was to be the sign hereafter forever of Jehovah's choice for His ministering High Priest.

So it was all done according to the command of the Lord, and on the morrow, when Moses entered the sacred precinct, lo and behold! eleven rods lay before him as dead as when he had placed them there, but the twelfth, bearing his brother's name, was full of bud and flower and fruit.

Truly a miracle of Divine selection and one that could never be misunderstood or set aside by the people. Moses then brought out all the rods and the living rod was placed in Aaron's hand, thereby signifying his divine selection for the holy office.

All murmuring now was at an end. God had spoken and in no uncertain way. Forever after, until Christ the true High Priest appeared, Aaron and his sons held this high position.

The rod was at God's command now placed inside

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the Ark of the Testimony itself, a perpetual memorial of the divine selection.

The symbolism is so well understood by all God's children it hardly seems necessary to pause long enough to point it out. The budding rod signified life from the dead—the gift of God—secured through our High Priest Jesus Christ, the Righteous Branch. He is the Branch appointed of God to bring life from the dead. And He Himself was dead but is alive forevermore.

Aaron's priesthood was a limited one; it had a beginning and an ending. Christ's priesthood fulfilled not only Aaron's in its intercessory ministration, but transcends Aaron's, going back in type to that of Melchisedec's, which had neither beginning nor ending.

Heb. 5:1,4-10.

1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

7 Who in the days of his flesh when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared;

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Since the setting aside of the Aaronic priesthood God has no ordained priests whatever except the sons of His High Priest, even every true believer.

We once were dead too, but now are we alive in

Christ Jesus, and by His life are we to bring forth the flowers and fruits of the new life in our offices of intercessor. Who can bring life from the dead but God? Who can produce in our dead hearts fruits meet for repentance? Only God.

Only when as dead branches we take our place before the Ark of God's Testimony can He put the new life in us and cause us to bear fruit for His glory.

DIVISION III.

LESSON IX.

THE CONFIRMATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

THE CONFIRMATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

Chapter 18

The 18th chapter is entirely taken up with a repetition of the laws regarding the privileges and responsibilities of the Priests and Levites.

These are probably reiterated here since the miracle of the budding rod again confirmed the appointment of Aaron as High Priest. So the repetition of the sacrifices and portions to be set aside for the Priests and Levites is also given by Jehovah that there may be no misunderstanding or evading of His commands from this time forth.

Since these laws are more fully laid down in Leviticus and we have called attention to their meaning in our earlier book The Gospel in Leviticus, it is only necessary here to remind ourselves of one or two facts regarding them.

Prohibition

The first is a prohibition. Only the anointed priests were privileged to serve in the Tabernacle. They through the various rites and ceremonies were in God's sight ceremonially clean and therefore fulfilled the command "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."

The Privilege

No stranger was to be permitted to approach. A place was made for the stranger in the mercy of God, but he must abide in his place and not presume to take that of the anointed or specially selected ones. A reference to this may be seen in

Matt. 15:27.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

Christ's words proclaim where this truth and the necessity of our approaching Him upon the right ground is proclaimed. Even the anointed ones were hedged around by God's laws regarding their work and offices and if they overstepped by the slightest act these restrictions, judgment immediately fell. Hence Uzzah's death in

2 Sam. 6:6, 7.

6 And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.

7 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

Thus was the holiness of Jehovah displayed and maintained in the midst of His people. Too little today is this holiness regarded. Because of our permission to approach the throne through the blood of the everlasting covenant too often we approach in haste, without due reverence or in a spirit of listlessness. Our nearer approach has been made possible only by the death of our substitute and should be sacredly guarded by us and most reverently used.

Did we remember this we would guard our wandering thought in prayer and in God's house, and we would not turn so readily from listening to the word of God to discuss the pleasures and politics and business of the day.

Holiness becometh Thine house, oh Lord, and if Israel was taught reverence for the mere material things which represented God to them, of how much deeper reverence should we be who are to worship in spirit and in truth.

The Portion

The next thing we observe is the portion of the offerings which was to be set aside for those who served in the Tabernacle. Not only was the portion named but

the quality was determined. It was to be of the best. Surely Jehovah provides not only bountifully but richly for His own. To Israel He had promised the finest of wheat, a land flowing with milk and honey. To His appointed representatives their portion of all this was to be the best.

Our Lord confirms all this to us His ministering priests today when He says: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." It reminds me of the children's verse:

"Said the Robin to the Sparrow,
'I should really like to know
Why these anxious human beings
Rush about and worry so?'

"Said the Sparrow to the Robin,
'Friend, I think that it must be
That they have no heavenly Father
Such as cares for you and me.'"

Surely if God **knows** that is enough. He will then supply not merely the material needs but all the riches of grace that are in Christ Jesus. Have you ever really pondered upon that promise? If God is true, and that promise is true, what are we anxious about? Why should the children of **such** a king go mourning all their days? Jesus says:

Jno. 6:35.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Jno. 7:37.

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

and God affirms,

Rom. 8:31, 32.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

The Reward

The last word to the priests was that in their service of sacrifice and renunciation they would in no wise lose their reward.

They had no land like their brethren; they had no crops upon which to depend; they had no spoils of war after the victory. Theirs was a life set aside from much that men held of value; theirs was a constant daily waiting upon God, representing not only themselves but their brethren in sacrifices and in daily intercession, and God said in effect, "Be ye faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life."

Even a cup of cold water ministered in the name of a disciple (i. e., Christ's anointed priest) shall not fail of its reward. God is not unmindful of our ministry but in due time will reward us if we faint not.

Heb. 6:10.

10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

The laborer He says is worthy of his hire.

1 Cor. 15:58.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

QUESTIONS ON LESSONS VIII, IX.

Aaron's Rod.

1. Give the reason for the test of the rods.
2. Explain the spiritual significance.
3. Where was the budding rod kept and what did this signify?
4. State difference between Aaron and Melchizedec as types of Christ.
5. Who are the ministering priests today according to the Scriptures?
6. Give list of prohibitions and privileges of the Aaronic priesthood and how exemplified in us today.
7. Name the portions and rewards of the priests and apply to God's people now.

DIVISION III.

LESSON X.

THE WATER OF PURIFICATION.

THE WATER OF PURIFICATION.

Chapter 19.

We come now to a strange command, namely, the providing of a special water for a special purpose, and we find this provision **only** in the Book of Numbers. It is not contained among the laws in Leviticus, but is here introduced by the Holy Spirit for the first time. As nothing is inserted by chance in God's Word, but all is in the divine order and has a divine reason for its place, it behooves us to study this reason and learn the lessons contained therein.

This water was called the water of separation, or purification, and was to be used for the cleansing of any who had contracted defilement by the touch of the dead, a dead bone, or an open grave.

Of course it is necessary for us in studying these old laws to always keep in mind the fact that the actual thing mentioned or used had a deep underlying spiritual meaning.

A dead body **represented** sin working to its extremest limit and sin when touched by any one spreads and disseminates defilement. Therefore the bones, the graves, the bodies of the dead represented to Israel that deadly thing which, unless taken away by God, eternally separated the soul from him.

Therefore when an Israelite wilfully or inadvertently or even in the line of his duty, touched the thing that **represented** the defilement of sin in God's eyes, he had to, in order to be restored to communion with God, submit to God's cleansing provision, and it was for this, of God's mercy (that His people might be cleansed from all defilement) that God commanded a special water to be made to be used for this distinctive purpose.

The Red Heifer

How was it to be made? Strange ingredients we may think; and yet each had its spiritual reason.

First a red heifer had to be secured upon which never yoke had been placed. The heifer had to be slain by the officiating priest and her blood sprinkled seven times by the priest's finger before the Tabernacle.

Then the entire animal, hide, entrails and all, had to be taken outside the camp and there burned with fire until the whole was merely a heap of ashes. While the heifer was burning the priest was to throw upon it, to be consumed with it, cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool. The ashes therefore contained the remains of these as well as of the heifer.

After the priest had performed all of these injunctions he, having contracted defilement ceremonially himself from his contact with them, must bathe himself and his garments before he was able to take his place again as a ministering priest before the altar.

Then a man that was clean, of course this meant ceremonially clean, was to gather up the ashes and place them without the camp in a clean place. But he also from his contact with the ashes had to bathe himself and his clothes and remain unclean until evening.

The law was that not only those who touched the dead, but the tent in which a dead body lay and all articles in the tent and all vessels whose tops were not covered by lids were unclean, and needed this water of purification to be applied.

The water was applied by a ceremonially clean person taking the ashes of the red heifer and the cedar and the hyssop and scarlet wool, and placing them in a vessel with running water. Then with a bunch of hyssop this ashy water was to be sprinkled upon the

person or things defiled, on the third day from the contracting of the defilement and again upon the seventh day, and on the seventh day the defiled person was to bathe himself and his clothes and be pronounced clean and able once more to take his place with his brethren in the congregation of the Lord.

If a man having contracted defilement refused to go through this cleansing rite, that soul was to lose all his rights and privileges as an Israelite, and his communion with Jehovah in the privileges of the Tabernacle worship was cut off.

Strange laws. Strange water. What did it mean for Israel? What can it teach us? Much every way.

This you will notice is not a sacrifice for Israel's salvation such as the offerings represented. This is for a saved Israelite who in his daily walk became defiled, and a provision is here made for his daily cleansing. This accounts for the provision coming **only** in the Book of Numbers. This book is a record of God's dealings with His redeemed people in their daily walk with Him through this wilderness world. Therefore in Numbers the Holy Spirit tells us how this cleansing was to be obtained.

An Israelite was not **lost** by his defilement, but he was **separated** from communion with God, and this communion could not be restored until he was cleansed according to God's command.

So we as Christians are saved by the blood of the Lamb, saved for ever. But we may lose our fellowship with the Father, our communion with our Lord, our joy in the Holy Ghost if we touch sin in any form. Sin defiles in the saint as well as in the sinner and must be washed away daily if the child of God is to have the communion of the Holy Spirit. Provision is therefore made for this on the ground of atonement, as the death of the heifer signified. But it is now applied

as a constant cleansing of our walk as was set forth in Christ's act of washing the disciples' feet.

Jno. 13:7-10.

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

1st Jno. 1:7-10

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1st Jno. 2:1.

1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Salvation has been secured by the death of the Lamb, and for God's children the cleansing water for earth defilement has also been provided and must be sought for every transgression, whether deliberate or accidental.

Now look at the ingredients which supplied this cleansing water.

The red heifer speaks of our Lord in His uniform devotion to the cause for which He came; namely, to die. Red is always the color which signifies death throughout the Scripture. So the red heifer was devoted to death. The fact that no yoke was ever to have been upon him is deeply significant of the absolute sinlessness of our Lord. No yoke of sin ever

touched His holy shoulder. He, the sinless one, was slain and made sin for us without the camp.

The cedar speaks to us of the cross of wood, and the hyssop of the lowliness of His stooping to suffer. As the cedar is the tallest, so the hyssop is the lowest, of the shrubs, and this fact would seem to teach not only that the Highest in God's universe stooped to the lowest place for us, but also that His death encompassed the whole universe, reaching to all, whether exalted or abased. This is illustrated in

1 Kings 4:33.

33 And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

The scarlet wool teaches the need of destroying or reducing to ashes all sin, for the wool needs cleansing and the scarlet color points to the pomp and vanity of this world as seen in the scarlet woman of Revelation. These indicate some of the things involved in the securing of the water of cleansing as shown in Rev. 17:3—where the woman sits upon a scarlet beast, type of sin and pomp; and in Rev. 18:12-16—where we see the awful sinfulness of the wicked city portrayed as in scarlet.

Wool we know to be a soiled thing needing many waters for its purification.

So taken together all indicate the sacrifices made necessary not only for our redemption but also for our daily cleansing. It is all beautifully pictured in

Is. 1:18.

18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Ps. 51:2, 7.

2 Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

The number seven appears in the sprinkling on the third and seventh days. Three. The number of the Trinity, or Third Person of the Godhead. Our daily cleansing is only effected by the indwelling Holy Spirit who purges our dead consciences to living works. Seven times means completion. When all was done according to God's command the cleansing was complete and the re-instatement assured.

Such seem to be some of the deeper teachings of the water of separation made for the cleansing of Israel when she incurred defilement in her walk through this world.

Jas. 1:27.

27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Heb. 9:13, 14.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

QUESTIONS ON LESSON X.

The Water of Purification.

1. How was this water obtained, how used and what did it signify?
2. Prove by a New Testament reference.
3. Explain why inserted in Numbers and not in Leviticus.
4. Of what is death always a type in the Scriptures?
5. Explain what Israel lost by any contact with the dead and what the use of the water secured for him.
6. Give New Testament illustration as applied to a believer's daily life.
7. Give typical meaning of the ingredients of this water.

DIVISION III.

LESSON XI.

THE DEATH OF MIRIAM.
THE SIN OF MOSES.

THE DEATH OF MIRIAM. THE SIN OF MOSES.

Chapter 20.

In the nineteenth chapter we are given a line telling of the death of Miriam. She who had been the tender nurse of Moses' childhood; she who had been the sweet singer of Israel; she who had led the great chorus of praise with the timbrel and the dance. Miriam, the elder sister of Moses and Aaron died in the wilderness of Sin and never entered into the promised land. Moses' older sister who had watched by his bulrush cradle, cared for his infancy, followed him across the wilderness, sustaining and rejoicing him with her sacred poetry and splendid example. She who with her growing prominence had also allowed a growing jealousy to spoil her work. She who, punished by the hand of God with a leprous body, had been restored and forgiven by the very brother whom she had maligned and injured.

Now she was dead, and the only thing Moses would remember, I am sure, was her early love and sisterly care, and would grieve for the strong bright spirit which had so often cheered and encouraged him in his hours of weariness and depression.

Two things we can learn from Miriam's death. The first, that no interruption of God's work is ever caused by the removal of a workman. No one is necessary to God's work. It is only of His grace that we are permitted to serve.

Miriam's voice was silent, and yet Israel's songs went on. But Miriam's influence did not die with the silence of her voice. Whatever had been of God in her life continued to inspire and encourage the people

of God, and to this day Miriam leads us in our praise when we repeat her inspired outburst of adoration.

Ex. 15:20, 21.

20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

21 And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

The second thing for us to learn from her life and death is that the only regrets we or others will have hereafter will be that we failed to glorify God in our lives.

Moses would want to forget Miriam's jealousy and only want to remember her love; and so would she. Love is the only thing that is enduring; all else must one day be consumed as waste energy. Let us love in deed and not in word only, and make our lives a song that will keep singing long after the singer has disappeared.

But the very next line tells us that Israel's songs were drowned in their bitter murmurings, and in spite of miracle, judgment, promise, warning and exhortation, at the first sign of lack of water again Israel complains and turns upon their leaders to rend them. This is their seventh murmuring—a murmuring on account of lack of water.

Strange is it not that at every testing they fail to do the one thing they could do and the one thing God wanted them to—make their requests known unto Him. Why did they always think the Lord's hand shortened? Why did they doubt His ability and His wisdom and His love? Why did they never learn their lesson of trust? Why did they spoil every opportunity for displaying unbounded confidence in their Shepherd guide by murmuring, rebelling, complaining, sulking and fault finding?

Well, why do we?

You say they had the miracle of the riven rock, the miracle of the heavenly manna, the sight of the shekinah cloud and pillar of fire, the sound of the silver trumpets, and yet they **never** learned to say "I will trust and not be afraid." "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

Well, we have all of this and far, far more besides, for we have Christ Jesus, willing and able to supply all our needs, ever waiting to give us His best. And yet are we never rebellious, dissatisfied, anxious, careworn, critical?

Now all of these incidents are recounted for our warning.

1 Cor. 10:1-12.

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with many of them God was not pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

The Rod

Look now at the incident and see Moses' sin as well as Israel's in it.

First notice God's command to Moses. When the people railed against Moses and Aaron for their suffering, Moses and Aaron did not argue with them or try to placate them. They did what all persons in authority should do when they are found fault with; they fell upon their faces before the Lord.

And God answered them and commanded Moses to take **the rod** and to **speak** to the rock in the presence of all Israel, and God covenanted with Moses and Aaron to supply their needs with the rush of water which should come forth at their call.

But what did Moses do?

He took **his** rod, and severely rebuked the people in his anger, implying that he and Aaron were supplying their need, thereby taking glory to himself which belonged to God. And worst of all, he **struck** the rock in his anger.

What was wrong? Moses had lost his temper. The meekest of men had given way to wrath under severe provocation and his wrath had blinded him to God's express commands, so that he had overstepped the bounds of His commands, and not only disobeyed but had failed to glorify God in this marvelous exhibition of God's power.

God in spite of this faithfully kept His covenant with Moses and the water gushed forth as He had promised, a living stream, sufficient for the people's need and their cattle. But Moses had to be disciplined for his disobedience and lost the honor of leading his people into the promised land in consequence.

Now why was his fault so deeply grievous, for it went even deeper than a sudden loss of temper and

an act of disobedience to God's command, bad as those sins would have been?

First, it seems to appear in the account that Moses in striking the rock used Aaron's rod and not his own. Moses' rod was the striking rod, the rod of authority with which at God's word he had struck the Red Sea and it had receded before their feet. With it he had struck the rock in the beginning at God's command and from its riven side the water had gushed forth.

Now he is told to take the rod, Aaron's rod, the rod of grace and fruitfulness, and holding it before the rock speak that the water already prepared by the former strike might flow again in answer to their prayers.

So whether Moses struck the rock with his own rod of authority, or whether he used the rod of Aaron's appointment, in either case he entirely mis-taught the people the deep spiritual significance of the act.

Aaron's rod was not intended for striking purposes and Moses had not been told to use his own. Why?

1 Cor. 10:4.

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ

tells us exactly.

The smitten rock was a type of Christ. Smitten of God once for all in order that the living water might flow out to all people. To saints it thus was typically crucifying Christ the second time, and was therefore a misleading and highly treasonable offense.

To receive the water of life now one has but to speak and to him that asketh shall be given.

So one little act of disobedience we find to deeply grieve the heart of God and to mislead or falsely teach the children of God, and this will have judgment pronounced upon it and will most certainly cause the one so offending to lose immensely in his rewards.

The only safe rule for any one, especially those high

in authority who are placed as leaders and teachers of the people, is to stick implicitly to the **word** of God, neither adding to nor taking from it.

Moses probably did not understand the type but that made no difference in regard to his obedience. His duty was to obey the literal command and honor God's word in the presence of the people. In

Rev. 22:18, 19 we read

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

This truth is most solemnly reiterated for us. Our duty is to obey as implicitly as did the gallant three hundred:

Theirs not to reason why;
Theirs but to do and die;
Gallant three hundred.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XI.

The death of Miriam.

The sin of Moses.

1. Give a synopsis of Miriam and some of her achievements.
2. What does the death of God's servants teach us?
3. Has Miriam received her rewards for service yet? If not, why not?
4. Give seventh murmuring and its consequences.
5. What proof had Israel of God's ability and willingness to supply their need?
6. What proofs have we?
7. State where this command of God's to Moses differed from His first command to bring water from the rock.
8. Explain the deep spiritual meaning.
9. Explain difference between Moses' rod and Aaron's.
10. State the whole duty of a child of God in regard to God's commands.

DIVISION III.

LESSON XII.

THE SIN OF EDOM.
THE DEATH OF AARON.

THE SIN OF EDOM.
THE DEATH OF AARON.

Chapter 20.

In this twentieth chapter we find recorded the sin of Edom in refusing permission to Israel to cross over their land, even when the Israelites bound themselves by a solemn vow not to plunder or disturb any of their possessions. A surly refusal is the answer, accompanied by a threat of war if Israel attempt the passage.

Who were the Edomites? To discover this we must turn back to Gen. 36:9.

9 And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir.

They were descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother. So Israel and Edom were kinsmen, but kinsmen who had had an earlier grudge, and while God had not suffered Esau to touch a hair of Jacob's head, neither would He suffer Jacob, now grown to be the Israelitish nation, to touch a single possession of Esau's.

The exact justice of God is shown here. While Esau threw away his birthright and Jacob secured it, Jacob could not therefore molest Esau or take aught else from him. Hence the courteous request for a privilege, a privilege which Israel might have claimed as a right, having supplanted Esau as the elder brother, a privilege which is surlily refused.

But the spirit of Esau is still in his descendants, a spirit of rebellion against God and God's people, and this opportunity is now seized in order to vex and annoy Israel. So a refusal curt and cruel is sent.

Well, God accepted the refusal and gave the Edom-

ites their way, turning his people into other paths and skirting the land of Edom in their march.

But to get one's own way in a controversy with the Almighty is a very dangerous thing, as Edom found out later to his sorrow. To run counter to God's will is indeed to run against the thick bosses of His bucklers. The only one who gets hurt is the opposer. If you will follow Edom's history throughout the Scriptures you will find the punishment of God following through their entire national life. And they might have had a rich blessing.

Ez. 12:12-14.

12 And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with his eyes.

13 My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

14 And I will scatter toward every wind all that are about him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them.

The spiritual significance in our wilderness life is that Satan will oppose us even in the religious world by those who are brethren if we attempt to cross their paths, for there is no enmity like religious enmity among those who call themselves Christians but **are not.**

There is open hostility to God's children by Satan through the world's people, here represented by the Canaanites in the land, and a more subtle hostility invoked by him by the religious world, here represented by the Edomites, those who knew something of the truth of God but refused to listen to God's commands and implicitly to obey them.

Is the church today not filled with such? Those who call themselves children of the same Father and yet who heed not His voice, nor honor His requests, nor

follow His commands, but oppose and threaten those simple souls who believe God and are following Him, a separated, peculiar, obedient people, through their pilgrimage here.

AARON

The death of Aaron follows closely that of Miriam. Another blow falls upon Moses as one by one his own familiar friends pass out of sight, leaving him to carry the heavy load of this people without their assistance and advice.

But we have every reason to doubt the comfort of Aaron to Moses. Was he not much more a veritable thorn in his flesh? Look back over his history and see. It was of Moses' fear and shrinking that God finally consented to the presence of Aaron with him as his mouthpiece. The older brother was evidently more glib of tongue than Moses and this is clearly seen in the glib speech he makes in explanation of the golden calf. May we not believe that had there been no Aaron there would have been no golden calf? Well, at any rate, it **was** Aaron who while glib of tongue was certainly weak of will, who made and permitted unrebuked the idolatry and licentiousness of that calf worship. Surely this must have been a terrible shame to Moses.

Again, it was Aaron's weakness in not training his sons properly that led to their sacrilegious crime for which they had to pay with their death.

Then again, it was Aaron who in place of reproving Miriam for her jealousy and rebellion aided and abetted her in it. It looks also as if it had been Aaron who instigated or augmented Moses' sin in striking the rock, for for this very sin he is now to be stripped in full health and vigor of all the royal insignia of his office and to see his honors placed upon another, and then outside the land of promise he was to pass to his fathers without entering in.

Moses is commanded to take Aaron in his official robes with his son Eleazar up to the top of Mt. Hor and there to take his robes of office from him and place them upon his son's shoulders. God then took his life and he was buried in lonely Hor, in view of the promised land but not within it.

When the two men returned alone Israel knew what had befallen and there was mourning for thirty days throughout the camp, for in spite of all his mistakes and weaknesses, Aaron had been anointed of God and had represented the people before God, pleading for himself as well as for them the sheltering blood, and that was what now both they and God remembered.

Heb. 5:1-4.

1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Ps. 115:1.

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

DIVISION III.

LESSON XIII.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

Chapter 21.

We come now to the eighth and last recorded murmuring of Israel in this wilderness journey.

These complaints are as follows:

First murmuring at the way.
Second murmuring of the food.
Third murmuring of the leaders.
Fourth murmuring of the land.
Fifth murmuring of the priesthood.
Sixth murmuring of God's judgments.
Seventh murmuring of lack of water.
Eighth murmuring of the kind of bread.

Here we have a people loathing what God provided. It was not lack of bread, but a case of not liking the kind of bread.

Manna was a heavenly food and it seemed unappreciated by an earthly people. For forty years the manna fell and it contained all the elements necessary for health and strength without the addition of any other food. But it was always the same. Day after day they gathered; it always came the same way; looked the same way; tasted the same way; and they wanted variety and spice. And so, not having a heart for God, they had no taste for God's food, and from wearying of it they came to disliking it and finally to loathing it.

My, my, we say, What a people! What did they want? Their every want supplied and yet not satisfied!

If you listen to the complaints of those around you, you will wonder how they will ever find happiness in heaven when there will be nothing with which to find fault.

They complain that it is either too hot or too cold.

The sermon is either too long or too short.

People either neglect them, or they are expected to do too much, etc. ad infinitim.

Now unless the crowns do not fit or the harps are out of tune, they will certainly find themselves without occupation in the place to which they say they are going.

Well it is easy to criticize Israel. But it is better to look into our own hearts and read the lesson there.

Manna.

What did the manna typify? Surely Christ. He himself says so.

Jno. 6:32, 35, 47-51.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Christ then is the soul's supply. Always the same, capable of satisfying every need of the spiritual life. But do we seek this supply constantly, day after day, and never tire? Let each one answer for himself.

How can we feed upon Christ, except through His Word? Do we take it as our daily portion? over and over again, never desiring the spicier things of the world? Just be honest. Is the Bible or the newspaper most often in your hands? Are you feeding your mind more and more on the Word of God or the word of some

novelist? Before condemning Israel too severely let us ask ourselves if we are any better satisfied with our spiritual food than they were with their earthly.

Well, the reason they were not satisfied was a deep seated one. Again, it was a heart matter, not a stomach matter. If the heart is right with God the taste will crave what He has to give.

So as sin was the root of the matter, it was sin which had to be dealt with in this stiff-necked and rebellious generation. Sin came first in the form of a serpent. So when Israel saw the glittering form and fiery eye of the scorpion, whose bite was death, they knew that their sin had found them out, and of their own lusts they had been harboring vipers which now escaped to sting them.

Death reigned throughout the camp. Serpents seemed to spring from the dust, and men, women and children were fleeing, only to be pursued and smitten by the fiery scourge.

It is easy to picture the scene, the dead in heaps, the living in terror, the dying in agony, and Moses in prayer to God to relieve the awful situation. This was what God had been waiting for and instantly the remedy is supplied.

The Serpent of Brass.

Make a serpent of brass. Lift it high upon a standard. Sound the trumpet with the message. "Look unto the serpent and be ye saved; all that have received this deadly bite."

It is done immediately. A brazen serpent is fashioned and suspended upon a banner staff, hanging from the arms of this cross and lifted so high that every eye in camp can see it. Then the trumpets sound the glad message, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth."

There is life for a look at the Crucified One. He who was made in the likeness of sin and for sin took

all the deadly sting of sin in His own bosom and sends healing by the wireless of faith. "The sword of Justice fell and sheathed itself in Christ's bleeding side.

All this the New Testament most clearly shows to have been the symbolic teaching of that brazen serpent.

Jno. 3:14-17.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Brass typifies judgment.—The brazen altar was used for the burnt offering on which God's judgment fell. The brazen serpent had the likeness of the deadly one, but was without its sting. It was the only way by which a bitten, dying Israelite could be cured. No physician, no self effort, no creed or rite or ceremony could avail.

Look at God's plan. That was all. Faith made the stricken one look, and in answer to that faith in God's bald word, God worked the cure. The brazen serpent did not cure, but faith in what God said about it did.

Imagine that day, as thousands lay dead and dying having to persuade any one to look at the glittering, brazen emblem, gleaming high up there in the sun. Can you not hear an agonized mother crying to her only son, "Look! Look! God has said a look at the Serpent will cure you. Only look!" Can you not hear a man, proud, and cold and self opinionated, replying to an anguished wife who is pleading with him to look and save himself while there is time, "My, dear, what nonsense; if the physicians of years of training cannot

cure me, how can a glance at a brazen image do me any good?"

So men talk today. But friends, neither education, nor culture, nor experience, nor science, nor religion can cure your sin-sick soul. God's word alone gives that remedy, and no matter whether you like it or not, and no matter whether you believe it or not, it still remains true that there high above the heads and minds and hearts of the sin-bitten race, stands the Cross of Christ, God's only remedy for the sting of sin. Jesus says, I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto Me.

Jno. 3:16.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 5:24-29.
Ro. 3:10-12, 19-26.

The New Song.

After the cure came the song and the rivers and the wells of refreshment. It is ever so. Bitten by sin, a dying race looking unto Jesus receives life from the dead, and then march forward healed and strengthened, with a new song in their mouth, even praise unto their God. Mr. Moody says:

So in heaven we after wandering days are over will sing the New song of Moses and the Lamb.

Some one has imagined David with his harp and Paul and Peter and all the others gathering to sing.

One suggesting the hymn "My God and Father while I stray" but that will not do because there will be no straying in heaven.

So they say try:

"I was a wandering sheep" but there the sheep are all safely gathered in the fold.

No, no, it will be the new, new Song. Ever new the Song of Moses and the Lamb.

Then there follow wells of refreshment flowing to others and making even the wilderness journey a place of growth and fruitfulness.

Is. 35:6.

6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Is. 43:19, 20.

19 Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

20 The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

While those promises are to be literally fulfilled in Israel's own land when Christ comes again to restore the waste places and build up the tabernacle of David which has been broken down, yet there is a spiritual sense in which they are fulfilled in every waste life redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and made by the water of life to bloom as the rose.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XII.

The Sin of Edom.

The Death of Aaron.

The Brazen Serpent.

1. Who were the Edomites?
2. Show the exact justice of God in His dealings here.
3. Apply to the believer's life and walk here.
4. Describe Aaron's death and some lessons from it.
5. Name the eighth and last recorded murmuring of the children of Israel.
6. Describe the manna and the commands regarding it.
7. Give its spiritual significance with New Testament proof.
8. Why is a serpent a clear type of sin in the Scriptures?
9. Give New Testament proof of the spiritual meaning of this scene.
10. What does brass typify?
11. What constituted the cure?
12. What always follows the cure?
13. What will be the new song of eternity according to Revelation.

DIVISION III.

LESSON XIII.

BALAAM'S PROPHECY AND ISRAEL'S SIN.

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BALAAM'S PROPHECY AND ISRAEL'S SIN.

Chapters 22—24.

We come now to the study of perhaps one of the strangest characters in all the Bible! A character that seems to be an enigma, a contradiction and one hard to explain unless one studies it closely and also sees the real nature of the man as revealed in the New Testament in

Jude 1:11.

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

Prophecy.

Balaam, the son of Beor, a prophet of the Lord, and yet a man who desires to prophesy contrary to the word of the Lord. A prophet who makes his living by prophesying and whose besetting sin is the love of gold. For this he sells his soul, and while not permitted to utter any word except that given him by God, yet is rebellious over his message in his heart and as soon as the compelling hand of God is removed from his mouth, his heart asserts its control and he devises the most contemptible, devilish trap in which to trip up the very people his lips had not been allowed to curse.

The cause of all this is Israel's advance in the desert which brings her in contact with the tribes already settled there. God had given her a signal victory over the Amorites and this had caused uneasiness in all the other tribes.

As she now approached the plains of Moab, Balak the Moabitish king, feared greatly, and knowing of a prophet named Balaam, whose fame had reached

to distant lands, he sends an envoy bearing rich gifts to him, inviting him to come over and pronounce a curse against this oncoming nation, a curse which will destroy them and prevent their advance.

The reward, if the prophecy is fulfilled, is to be great wealth, and the heart of Balaam covetously desires the offered gold. So being a prophet whom God had used for foretelling the truth he enquires of Him and is very distinctly told "Thou shalt not curse the people for they are blessed."

Greatly disappointed, Balaam has to so report to Balak's messenger and so decline the bribe they brought him. Sorrowfully he says, "The Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you."

But Balak refuses to take "no" for his answer and again sends messengers with larger bribes, beseeching the prophet to come and curse the people.

Again Balaam entreats God to at least allow him to go with the messengers, and as so often we have seen God do before, He gave him his request, but sent leanness into his soul. Balaam may go, but dare not curse, and warning his covetous servant, God even performs a miracle to turn him from his wickedness, and when Balaam, whose eyes were blinded by the glitter of the gold which his heart coveted, could not see the angel in his path, God made the very brute beast on which he rode rebuke and warn him.

The ass spoke when God commanded and proved himself a better servant for God than the miserable man who sat upon him. The miracle is referred to by Peter with the warning which it was intended to convey.

2 Pet. 2:16.

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

But neither God, nor an angel, nor an ass can turn the wicked from their path when they are determined

to follow the lusts of their own hearts, and the love of money is the root of all evil. This was the root sin of Balaam's life, love of filthy lucre.

Arriving at his destination, Balak takes him four times to different heights overlooking the far-reaching camp of the Israelites and urges him by all the bribes in his power to utter curses upon their heads. Four times Balaam essays to please him and gain the wealth so offered; but four times God controls his speech and words of blessing in place of cursing sound in the ears of the angry king.

It cannot be done. Those whom God hath blessed can no man or devil curse. "If God be for us who can be against us." Satan tried hard to pronounce a judgment on Israel, but while God would and did discipline His people severely for their sins, He permitted no one else to speak a word against them. They were His. He had called them by name. They were redeemed by His blood, they were blessed of Him and would bring blessings to all upon the earth. Curses against them only returned upon the curser's head.

Rom. 14:4.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

Ps. 2:12.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Matt. 5:11.

11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Neh. 13:2.

2 Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing.

Jno 10:28, 29.

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Rom. 8:39.

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The more Balaam tried to curse the richer grew the blessings until at the last, looking down through the ages, he pronounced those prophetic words

Num. 24:17.

17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

and then followed a list of judgments upon every nation which resisted Israel and knew not Israel's God.

The Scriptures say Balaam rose up and returned to his place and Balak also went his way. Like Judas, each man went to his own place, away from God.

But while Balaam's mouth could not pronounce the words of cursing, his heart was full of it and determining to have that gold at any cost, he revealed a diabolical plan to Balak which by bringing sin into Israel herself, he thought God would have to curse her; and so Balaam, like many deluded men since, thought he could outwit God.

When Balaam failed to curse he managed to seduce, and Israel, so beloved of God, so protected by God and hedged round about by God's loving restraints, breaks through all these barriers and yielding to the lust of the flesh falls an easy prey to the seductions of the Moabitish women.

Satan never wearies of trying to destroy us, and when one temptation fails he soon has another with which to approach. He is a trinity of evil. The world assails, the flesh desires, the devil deceives, and only one

encased in the armor of God is proof against such attacks.

God must judge and punish sin in His people. Satan dare not curse, but that does not prevent God from disciplining, and when a sin so foul and heinous breaks out in His people, death must follow and a summary judgment fall.

Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, is the chosen weapon and under divine instruction slays with his own dagger an Israelitish man and his guilty partner who had dared pollute the sanctity of the camp by coming into its very midst with their sin.

Judgment having been rendered in the sight of all the people the death plague is stayed and the cleansing of the camp is commanded and made through the sacrifices of atonement and vengeance executed upon the Midianites for the sin wherewith they made Israel to sin.

A sorrowful story. A deluded man. A guilty nation. Surely the lessons are all clear as a bell for those who are willing to see them. Balaam is the picture of a man who tries to serve God and Mammon at one and the same time, the same impossible task many continue to try in this day. A man who is used of God for good and yet strives ever to do his own evil. A man who tries to gain God's sanction to his own wrong. A man who serves the devil and yet gets cheated of his reward in the end.

The love of money drove him farther and farther from God. His sin was cumulative; first desire, then disobedience and lastly crime. And his end disgrace and death—going to his own place.

God's attitude towards Israel in regard to others and His attitude towards Israel in regard to Himself is clearly contrasted. He will discipline; none other dare touch. But woe to His own if they defile their garments.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XIII.

Balaam's prophecy.

1. Give Balaam's history, office and reputation.
2. Give New Testament Scripture proving his sin.
3. Who was the obedient servant here—the ass or the prophet?
4. Give New Testament verse proving the veracity of this miracle.
5. How many times did Balaam try to disobey God?
6. Who alone can discipline God's people?
7. Give the beautiful prophecy of Christ uttered by Balaam and state when fulfilled.
8. What was Balaam's wicked plan?
9. What summary judgment of Israel's sin stayed the awful plague?
10. Are there times when severe measures are the kindest?
11. Show the cumulative effect of sin.

DIVISION III.

LESSON XIV.

CLOSING INSTRUCTIONS.

Part II.

CLOSING INSTRUCTIONS.

Chapters 26 to 36.

THE NEW CENSUS THE NEW GENERATION THE NEW LEADER

Chapter twenty-six, while a long chapter of 65 verses, is merely a re-numbering of the tribes preparatory to their entering the promised land.

According to God's judgment, pronounced upon sinning Israel at the time of their refusal to enter at His command, not one of that generation then living was allowed to enter in, save only those faithful two whom we have mentioned before—Joshua and Caleb—the two who urged the people to go up in the fear of the Lord but were overruled by the faithless majority.

The bones of this rebellious, stiff-necked generation lay scattered throughout the wilderness wanderings, marking with their graves that sad and weary march.

But a new race had in the meantime grown up and the children who came out from Egypt and those born during the forty years wilderness wanderings were now the men of war and made a new Israel, more pliable to God's commands.

Doubtless the hard experience of the desert with its miracles and its tragedies, its lessons and its sacrifices, had led them to desire a better country and taught [illegible] that with Him all things were possible.

[illegible] the new generation was now to be enrolled as the former one had been and prepared by instruction and commands not only to go up and possess the land, but how to maintain themselves when they were in it.

There are many lessons here for us. Probably the

most important is to see that while men may fail God and delay His blessings by their lack of faith and by their disobedience, yet God's word abides and all His purposes will be fulfilled. Old Israel's bones whitened the desert. New Israel girded themselves for war and took the land old Israel had rejected.

The sad part in the enumeration of the tribes was that it showed a decrease in the numbers. 603,550 men of war and 22,000 Levites were numbered the first time, while 601,730 men of war and 23,000 Levites in the second count. May this not teach us that even if God's purposes are accomplished yet to the disobedient there comes always a loss?

The prodigal received home and shoes and a ring and a feast and a father's forgiveness, but he lost eternally his capital wherewith to serve the father and add to his honor and glory.

This is further impressed upon us by the record of God's people, whose years of wandering and separation from God are never counted in His chronology. This explains many so-called discrepancies in the numerations of Israel in the Bible. God does not count the wasted years. They are a dead loss to Him and to us. All the thirty-eight years of wanderings in the story before us are passed over in complete silence, for they should have come in somewhere between the 13th and 14th verses of the 20th chapter, and nowhere else is any mention of this part of Israel's history except in the brief and bald itinerary of the journey given in chapter 33:1-37.

The lesson is obvious for the soldier of Jesus Christ. He is to strive to be on the honor roll, fighting the good fight of faith in nothing terrified by our adversaries.

Phil. 1:28.

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

Eph. 6:10-13.

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

1 Pet. 5:8.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

The secret of many a failure is a lack of full and open committal; let us get our names on the roll of honor. Bunyan describes a scene which he saw at the gates of the Palace Beautiful, where hosts of armed men were driving back all that tried to force an entrance; but the brave soldiers of the cross were putting on their panoply and marching through the fierce hosts of hell, giving and receiving terrific blows. At length, however, covered with blood, they forced their way through the open gates, while harps within were heard resounding with the glorious shout "Come in! Come in! Eternal glory thou shalt win." One brave man looking on stepped up to the man with the ink horn and roll, and said: "Sir, put down my name too," and then joined the brave victors in the fearful strife. Are our names down on the roll of battle at the threshold of the promised land? That is for us the question.

Division of the land.

The numbering of the people was followed by the partition of the land. Although still in the desert, in God's sight they were as certain of their inheritance as if they were actually upon it. What a comfort for us. Our inheritance in Christ Jesus is as certain and

as assured as if we were already in heaven itself, for what He had promised that He will also perform.

Rom. 4:20-22.

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Phil. 1:6.

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Is. 9:7.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Is. 40:8.

8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Heb. 6:13-20.

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

2 Tim. 2:19.

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having

this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Do you believe these words? If you do it should give you perfect peace, it should give you power over your adversaries, joy in the Holy Ghost and an unwavering confidence in the fulfillment of all God's promises both for Israel in this world and the inheritance laid up for the saint in the world to come. Beloved, if God is the same yesterday, today and forever what have we to fear?

Among the Israelites coming to claim their inheritance were five unmarried women, who demanded of Moses, seeing there was no man to represent them, the land which their fathers would be entitled to. This was a real puzzle for Moses to solve, and one of the proofs of the inspiration of Moses' books is that he never knew of himself what to do with the many perplexing problems which arose from time to time in his ministry until he had asked Jehovah and received His reply.

So here again we find Moses asking wisdom from above, and it is, as ever it is, given liberally and the question solved for all time. The women too are to have their part in the divine inheritance. While not able to be men of war, they are able to be women of faith, and it is their faith which gains them a portion of the land for their very own.

Matt. 15:28.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

How clear is the message here that faith is the thing God is seeking, the thing which always brings the blessing and yet it is the thing least exercised amongst many of God's children.

Luke 18:8.

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

And now that the organization is nearly effected and the lines of partition are clearly marked out and all is in order for the word of advance, a new leader must be appointed in Moses' place, for he with the old generation is debarred by disobedience from entering in.

The **judgment** of God is seen in the carrying out of His sentence, while the **grace** of God is seen in His showing Moses from Pisgah's heights the goodly land which his people were now to claim according to God's promise to their forefather Abraham.

Moses must die in that lonely spot. That is law. But God will Himself lay His servant to rest. That is **grace.** And centuries later Moses, redeemed, purified, resurrected and transfigured, stood with the great Emancipator of the race, our Lord Jesus Christ, in that promised land, on the Mount of Transfiguration, and with Him saw into the future, when not only the land, but all the earth, should be for His inheritance.

There Moses saw the law perfectly fulfilled in Christ. The riven rock and heavenly bread supplied by Christ, the sacrifices and waters of cleansing completed in the Cross of Christ. All the promises and covenants, the types of the Tabernacle and priesthood, the provisions and portions, the fasts and the feasts, all gathered up and remade in Christ Jesus our Lord. And when he saw Him he was satisfied, for he had been made like Him.

Ps. 17:15.

15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.

In type we must remember Moses represented the inflexibility of the Law. It took the new leader

Joshua, meaning "Salvation of the Lord," and often spelled Jesus, to take the people over. This is **grace.**

Moses—the law—could only bring them to Jordan's bank—the river of death.

Joshua—salvation—could take them across dry shod.

Rom. 8:1-4.

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Gal. 3:24.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Moses the schoolmaster had done his work and was superseded by Joshua, the new leader, with power to carry on and fulfill all that had been promised to Israel generations before. So here we have Moses appointing his successor and ordaining him before all the people as the one chosen of the Lord to continue the work he was so soon to lay down.

So the workers fall one by one, but the work continues under the Master builder, and there is no interruption but a continued advance, and it is a wise leader who remembers this and does not think more highly of himself than he ought to think and who has younger and better men in training for the continuance of God's work.

Ps. 115:1-3, 9, 12, 13, 16-18.

1 Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?

3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

9 O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.

12 The Lord hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

13 He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great.

16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

17 The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.

18 But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord.

To each his appointed task; to each his special reward. Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, and Joshua was faithful in all his house as a servant. But Jesus Christ was faithful in all His house as a Son, and in Him are all the promises fulfilled.

Heb. 3:1-6.

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XIV.

Closing Instructions.

1. State difference between the Old Generation and the New.
2. Prove that loss always follows disobedience.
3. State difference between God's chronology and man's.
4. Explain difference in the numerations of Israel in the Bible.
5. Prove certainty of Israel's possessions and ours.
6. Show God's care of women even in the old regime.
7. Show both the judgment of God and His grace in His dealings with Moses.
8. When in the Scriptures do we next see Moses?
9. Typically what did Moses represent?
10. What did Joshua represent?
11. Give New Testament proof of each and the superiority of Christ.

DIVISION III.

LESSON XV.

PREPARATION FOR POSSESSION.

PREPARATION FOR POSSESSION.

THE DAUGHTERS' INHERITANCE.

Chapter 27.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

Chapter 35.

In the twenty-eighth chapter we have a renewal of all the commands regarding the sacrifices and offerings. The new generation was walking with God on exactly the same ground that their fathers had occupied, namely, the ground of redemption. The daily sacrifices, the weekly Sabbath, the annual feasts and the recurring cleansings, all were to be strictly observed and on no account to be set aside.

Hence the new generation was given fresh instruction that there might be no excuse for failure to keep these ordinances and teach them to their children.

They were to be a perpetual reminder of the ground of their acceptance with God, the ground of the shed blood alone. Never were they or their children to forget this, and the lesson for us is distinct and clear. Our only ground of fellowship with God is the ground of redemption. The blood shed reconciles and cleanses and makes valid all the promises. We have no other authority for any approach to God. Universalism may teach the ultimate salvation of every one; there is no such teaching anywhere in God's Word.

The blood of Christ accepted imparts eternal life. The blood of Christ rejected brings eternal death. This is God's word; not mine or any human being's. Read and ponder.

Mark 16:16.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Jno. 3:15-18.

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Jno. 3:36.

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Rev. 20:14, 15.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Also that there is an extinction of life for the unbeliever is forever refuted by Christ's own picture of the future of the lost.

Luke 16:23, 25, 26.

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Israel was saved only by the shed blood of her God-appointed sacrifices; all her communion with God, her shepherding care, her marvelous promises, her glorious future were based on this one thing, the blood of the burnt offering—the Passover Lamb. And our safety is dependent upon precisely the same ground. Christ has become our Burnt Offering—our Passover Lamb. His

blood is our only plea. Let us shelter 'neath it ere it is too late.

Eph. 2:13.
13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Heb. 9:14.
14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

1 Pet. 1:19.
19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Heb. 13:20.
20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

1 Jno. 1:7.
7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Rev. 7:14.
14 And I said unto him, Sir thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Rev. 12:11.
11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Besides the numbering of the people, the partition of the land, the renewal of the law of the offerings and vows, there were also severe judgments pronounced upon the enemies of Israel, the heathen nations which withstood them in their onward march. Especially were the Midianites to be severely dealt with. Those wicked people who had lent themselves to Balaam's vile plan to seduce Israel by their lewd women. All these nations had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. With all of them God said the cup of their

iniquity was full and they were ripe for judgment. From all were their misapplied possessions to be taken, but some were to realize more than others the chastening hand of the God they had defied and despised.

We must in this connection bear in mind that there was mercy in these judgments, mercy for God's children whom He Himself tells us would have been defiled and despoiled if they allowed any of the sin diseased nations to remain. One of two courses was open to the Canaanite and other pagan nations in the land, either to affiliate themselves with Israel as worshippers of the true God, joining them as the strangers for whom provision was made by God's mercy in His ordinances, and so becoming Israelites indeed, or the alternative of being wiped out as unrepentant sinners.

They chose the latter, and Midian especially came in for the divine displeasure. Root and branch must go. The children would grow up with the same vile natures of the fathers. Only by exterminating that which was already diseased and assimilating that in which there was a possibility of regeneration could the stain of the Midianites be wiped out. As later Agag must be hewn to pieces, as representative of the awfulness of Satan and his power, so now Midian must undergo the same judgment.

The spiritual lesson is surely for us that sin and that which tempts us to sin must not be gently dealt with. Sin must be hewn to pieces at any cost. When God commands the knife to be used against the lusts of our flesh it is sin to spare them.

Matt. 18:8.

8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

We of course in this sense do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but the meaning is the same.

Eph. 6:11, 12.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The most interesting thing to notice in all of the instructions regarding the portionment of the land when they should enter it is the setting aside of forty-eight cities for the Levites' use, at regulated distances, among which were to be selected six to be called Cities of Refuge. These six cities were placed equally at six different parts of the land, in order to be of easy access for those fleeing to them.

They were to be for the protection of any who might become murderers, whether wilfully, suddenly or accidentally. The murderer might flee to the City of Refuge nearest to him, and once within its gates was protected by law until he had had a fair trial. This prevented lynching or the taking of revenge into the individual hands and made a legal and judicial trial of the case possible. If the man was found guilty of premeditated murder his life must pay the forfeit.

Num. 35:31.

31 Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.

No ransom was allowed. He who shed man's blood must pay the penalty by having his blood shed, and God has never to this day altered this law and the government which does away with capital punishment is setting aside a distinct and unrecalled law of God in the government of this world, which is so full of evil doers.

If, however, the murder was suddenly committed

through a rush of passion or by an accident, the City of Refuge could protect him as long as the officiating High Priest lived and he the murderer, did not leave the city. If he left at any time before the death of the High Priest he could become a prey to the murdered one's family, because he had left the protection offered him by Jehovah.

Like Paul, the unintentional murderer could obtain mercy because he did it ignorantly.

So Israel today is the murderer of her Messiah, and while the avenger of blood would destroy her if he could reach her, God keeps her under His protection, albeit away from her home and her land and here in this city of refuge, a foreign place, and she must abide there until her High Priest returns from the heavens and restores her to her own again.

The day is coming for it is promised by type and sign and symbol and oath, that day when Israel will forever regain and occupy her land. Rebuild and inhabit her capital city. Rebuild and re-worship in her Temple. Repent and accept her rejected Messiah, and so complete and fulfill all that God has ever decreed for her. And the day when all this is to be established upon the earth is nearer than when these words were penned. And the eye of faith can see it, as Moses' eye viewed the promised land.

When He comes again to His own.

The Faithful Promise. He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people.

"He is faithfu' that hath promised, an' He'll surely come again,
He'll keep His tryst wi' me—at what hour I dinna ken;
But He bids me still to wait, an' ready aye to be
To gang at ony moment to my ain countrie.

So I'm watchin', aye, an' singin' o' my home as I wait
For the soundin' o' His foot fa' this side the gowden gate;
God gie His grace to ilka ane wha listens noo to me,
That we a' may gang in gladness to our ain countrie."

In closing these brief and very sketchy lessons on the Book of Numbers it only remains to touch upon the fulfillment of God's promises to Joshua and Caleb and to the daughters of Zelophehad who had claimed their fathers' inheritance from Moses when he was portioning the land among the tribes.

These women are now commanded not to intermarry with the other tribes but to keep their inheritance intact amongst their own brethren by marrying only in their own tribe; and so their inheritance is thus entailed to their children. No man could take from them what God had given. Our inheritance is assured and the command is also laid upon us to keep it undefiled and not lose it by unequally yoking ourselves with unbelievers.

2 Cor. 6:14.

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

After all there is as much gospel in the Book of Numbers as in any other book of God's Word, if we have a heart and an eye for it. Judgments there are, severe and immediate, but gleams of mercy shine through every page. All His deeds are love, whether in the thunders of the laws or the droppings of His grace. For in love and not in anger all His chastisements do come.

God is holy and He proclaims this in no uncertain way. His judgments are past finding out. Judgment is His strange work. Sin brought it about, requires it if God's holiness is to be maintained. If this holiness should for one instant waver the whole universe would totter and hell would be let loose.

At all costs holiness must and will be the first pillar of God's throne. But mercy is His delight. And mercy has been secured by the righteous judgment of

sin when it was assumed by the Son of God and expiated by His death.

Sin thus was dealt with, and mercy now flows from the stricken rock. All who will may drink and live. There is now no excuse for any who have ever heard of Christ being lost.

Sinners now why will ye die? Salvation has been procured; accept the offer of God's love and render Him the thanksgiving of your life and love.

That is the gospel of the Book of Numbers, as it is the gospel of every Book of the Bible, for the whole Bible was written as John's Gospel was, to reveal Jesus Christ as God the Saviour, and for us, that believing we might have life through His name.

Jno. 20:31.

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

That Christ is the figure to be seen through all the types and sacrifices, the laws and ceremonies of the Old Testament, He Himself affirms.

Luke 24:25-27, 44, 45.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.

God grant that we too when we read this Word of God may as did the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, after looking upon Moses and Elias and all the other figures presented to our view, lift our eyes from these to see no man save Jesus only.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XV.

The Cities of Refuge.

The Daughter's inheritance.

1. What is the clear teaching of the Scriptures both in type and word regarding the one and only ground or redemption and fellowship with God?
2. What in regard to future punishment for the unbeliever?
3. Do nations ever grow ripe for judgment as well as individuals?
4. Is there mercy offered?
5. How many Cities of Refuge were there in Israel?
6. State laws governing their use and reasons for same.
7. Has God ever removed the death penalty for murder?
8. Give typical teaching of the protection accorded the murderer.
9. Will Israel ever be able to return to her own land and possess it?
10. Who has promised it? Who will accomplish it?
11. Why were the daughters who inherited land permitted to marry only within their own tribe?
12. Give New Testament teaching of this truth.
13. Prove the Gospel in Numbers.

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